

ORNAMENTATION IN YORUBA DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE IN OSOGBO: A STUDY IN FORM, CONTENT AND MEANING

**By
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Studies, College of Science and Technology, Covenant University, Ota.
In Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of
Ph.D in Architectural History**

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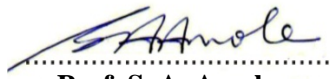
DECLARATION

I, **Adegoke**, Adedapo Kehinde, hereby declare that this thesis was written entirely by me under the supervision of Prof. S. A. Amole (Supervisor) and Prof. E. A. Adeyemi (Co-Supervisor) of the Department of Architecture, Obafemi Awolowo, University, Ile-Ife, Osun State and Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State, respectively and that it has not been presented either wholly or partly, for any degree elsewhere. All scholarly materials utilized in the work and their sources have been duly acknowledged.

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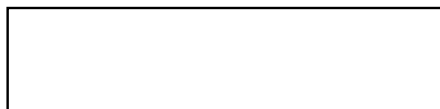
CERTIFICATION

This study entitled ‘Ornamentation in Yoruba Domestic Architecture in Osogbo: A study in Form, Content and Meaning’ carried out by Adegoke, Adedapo Kehinde under my supervision meets the regulation guiding the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Architectural History, Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria. We certify that it has not been submitted for the degree of PhD or any other degree in this or any other university and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.



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DEDICATION

To Him, who was and is and is to come, who sits on the circles of the earth, the Bishop of my soul and the Author and the Finisher of my faith, whose grace and power I relied upon to complete this mandate, The Al-Mighty God. To my late Mum, Adebimpe Adegoke, and to my Dad, Adegboye Adegoke and to my sweet heart Adebukunmi Adegoke.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined Yoruba ornamentation in domestic architecture in Osogbo consonant with its form, content and meaning. Ornamentation connotes decoration for the purpose of enhancing aesthetic appeal of buildings or any object in context. It is noted in literature that Yoruba aesthetic decorative instinct is reflective of a number of day to day material uses, activities and gestures, which are further translated in domestic building elements.

The method of research adopted in this study was historical and qualitative. The qualitative method involved observation and identification of ornamentation in buildings and documentation in photographs in addition to oral interviews. The historical method prompted the classifications of data collected into the ancient, modern and contemporary as well as their placement on building elements relative to the chronology of the buildings and periods. The interviews provided oral historical data, thereby revealing both private Yoruba contextual meanings and global interpretation of artistic decorations as well as the value of ornamentation on domestic architecture in Osogbo.

Findings from the study indicated that the ancient category of ornamentation in domestic buildings had more decorations than the modern genre. This is attributed to the influence of the colonial administrators, the returnee slaves from Portugal, Brazil and Sierra Leone. Findings also showed that ornamentation became more heightened in the contemporary than the ancient and modern classifications put together.

The study concluded that the value of ornamentation is embraced in Osogbo following the proliferation of workmen contributing their skills and talents to the production of exclusive aesthetic edifices. The subject of ornamentation in domestic buildings was in addition observed to be the exclusive preserve of the rich; though the effect of domestic decoration was observed to have percolated to the poor and middle class of the society. Decorative motifs, forms and designs generally do not get out of use but are cyclical as ancient motifs reoccur in contemporary elemental decorations in domestic buildings.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0

INTRODUCTION

1.1 PREAMBLE

Studies affirm ornamentation as a creative work of art in the decorative arts (Lewis, Philippa, and Darley 1986). Its purpose for adornment is to enhance beauty and an ancient human endeavour. Man had been decorating his objects, buildings, and himself throughout all of history and back into prehistoric era. From the moment man began to build objects of permanence, he decorated himself with patterns and textures proclaiming beyond any doubt that the objects were artifacts (Waterloo, 2009). The context of ornaments and ornamentation is obviously extremely broad, constrained only by the limits of human imagination. An Ornament is a decorative device, not essential to a structure in context, but often necessary to emphasise or diminish the impact of structural elements, sometimes with iconographic roles (Curl, 2000). On the one hand, ornamentation could be iconographically symbolic to represent a corporate logo, while on the other hand, it could be the application of ornaments on objects and people for overall beautiful outlook. Most cultures have evolved their own *repertoire* of architectural ornaments. Some of these materialise in the form of plant or floral motifs, animals and birds, emblems and heraldry, or human forms as reflected in architectural caryatids.

The decorative arts is traditionally a term for the design and manufacture of functional objects. It includes designing interiors, but not usually architecture. Interior design describes a group of various yet related projects that involve turning an interior space into an "effective setting for the range of human activities" (Pile, 2003). The decorative art is often categorized in opposition to the "fine arts", namely, painting, drawing, photography, and large-

scale sculpture, which generally have no function other than to be glimpsed (Fiell, and Peter, 2000). By inference from these two definitions, interior design objects such as artistically created chairs, tables, doors in addition to window blinds and other things that create effective setting for a range of human activities which stem from the decorative arts (referred to as ornamentation) are functional, while the fine arts productions are essentially for aesthetic appreciation.

Again, the decorative arts represent a traditional term for a number of arts and crafts. These include the ceramic art, also known as pottery, furniture/wood work, wood carvings, jewellery and metal works as executed by goldsmith, textile arts and other hard stone carving, including *pietra dura* (a semi precious stone) work and engraved gems, ivory and bone carving. According to the Curator of the Metropolitan Museum of Art of the Royal court, *Pietre dure* is an Italian plural of *Pietra dura*, meaning "hard rocks" or hard stones; and it is in the league of semi-precious stones as well as in the decorative art. The term embraces all gem engraving and hard stone carving, which is the artistic carving of three-dimensional objects in semi-precious stone.

Attempting a formal definition for ornamentation may be inadequate as any precise definition will omit important classes of ornamentation by its restriction or otherwise grow so extensive encompassing an awkward hybrid of non-ornamental objects. Ornamentation, like art, is hard to pin down, always eluding definition on the arms of human ingenuity (Kaplan, 2002). The subject of ornamentation has been defined by a myriad of scholars from diverse disciplinary backgrounds. Majority of these definitions and explanations agree that ornamentation is an adjunct, embellishment or decoration to enhance aesthetic appeal other than bareness on the subject of decoration.

In architecture and the decorative arts, it is a decorative detail used to embellish parts of a building or interior furnishing. Ornamentation is derived from a variety of media such as stained glass, studio glass, carved stone, wood or precious metals, Plaster of Paris (POP), clay, cement etc. In cement and POP applications, the mould for an ornamentation design is casted and impressed onto a surface as applied artifact on columns or windows as appropriate. A multiplicity of decorative styles and motifs developed for architecture and the applied arts, including ceramics, furniture, metalwork and textiles. Decoration, synonymous with ornamentation has been evident in civilization since the beginning of recorded history, ranging from Ancient Egyptian architecture to date.

In the taxonomy of the liberal arts such as music, ornamentation is regarded as the embellishment of a melody, either by adding notes or modifying rhythms. In European music, ornamentation is added to an already complete composition in order to make it more pleasing to the ear (O'Canainn, 1993). Many ornaments in music are performed as "fast notes" around a central note.

To a linguist, rhetoric in language (RL) can be used for persuading and convincing an audience, which in the real sense is void of honesty and sincerity. At the end, the presenter is gratified by being commended as an eloquent speaker. Based on this understanding, rhetoric was for many years regarded by scholars as a meaningless enterprise as it was perceived as a study of linguistic ornamentation (Holmgreen, 2008). The modernist, the protagonist and advocate of the preclusion of ornamentation on buildings also shares this same view of ornamentation as a good for nothing syndrome; a rhetoric of emptiness and aesthetics of surface modulation. RL on the other hand is used emphatically to drive home a point. Valsiner, (2008 p.69) doused the abuse of ornamentation by the modernist. He claims ornamentation has been systematically created by human beings long before the meaning of aesthetics was conferred on it. He further affirms ornamentation on ceilings; floors and

vertical surfaces are of primary function for our psychological environment. These evidently beautify homes and derive innate satisfaction and health to the residents. Consequently, walls, windows doors and doorways, columns are often decorated by ornaments.

A phenomenon worthy of mention is the Yoruba crave to adorn themselves for a good outlook. Since the origin of ornamentation has human attribute, it is appropriate to elicit how ornamentation is inseparably intertwined with man thereby engendering its reflection on domestic buildings as well as architecture as a whole. The Yoruba, consciously or otherwise, despise plainness and monotony. They naturally would want to liven or spice up by adorning themselves with good clothes or garments as well as cap to match for men and head gear for women. Dressing includes cloth and clothing traditions, tattooing, jewelry, hair-dressing in women as well as barbing in men (Oyeniya, 2012). Furtherance to this is the phenomenon of facial and body scarification. Cultures involved in scarification do it for the purpose of enhancing their outlook for attraction in addition to identification during war time. Dressing, to a Yoruba man, or woman, does not just comprise clothes but all bodily adornments. Conclusively, one can say it is this natural creative instinct to adorn in man that is reflective on the ornamentation in buildings, not only in Yoruba land but the world over.

Exclusive of Kings Palaces adorned in honour of the king which will be addressed later in the study, the traditional Yoruba architecture bore scanty ornamentation. It was built to fulfill the basic architectural need of shelter and protection. Its compound (*agbo'le*), comprising individual units or rooms (*oju'le*), can be termed International style in architecture. The International architecture style was without decoration following the cry of abolition of ornamentation on the built form (Fry and Drew 1964). Loos (1998) declared ornamentation a crime in architecture. The dwelling unit ranges from the large Patriarchal extended family to the nuclear family (Aradeon, 1984).

Colonialism had a major influence on the Yoruba built form accompanied by decorations on them following the exodus of returnee slaves from Sierra Leone and Brazil as further clarified in the literature review. The traditional style has an overlap with the colonially influenced style called the vernacular architecture. The Ornamentation on post traditional buildings evolved with time. This study therefore portend to investigate the characteristic evolution of post-traditional ornamentation in Yoruba architecture; its historio-cultural and socio-economic implications.

1.2 CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

1.2.1 *The Yoruba of Southwest Nigeria*

The Yoruba people live in the south western part of Nigeria. Though Yoruba speaking locations are extensive as far as Brazil to the ends of the globe, their origin is in the south west of Nigeria, South of the Sahara in West Africa. The Yoruba is one of the largest ethno-linguistic groups in West Africa. A majority of Yoruba speak the Yoruba language. They constitute about 30% individuals throughout West Africa and are found predominantly in Nigeria constituting about 33% percent of its total population of about 165 million. The Yoruba share borders with the Borgu (variously called Bariba and Borgawa) in the northwest, the Nupe (whom they often call, 'Tapa') and Ebira in the north, the Edo who are also known as Bini or Benin people (unrelated to the people of the 'Republic of Benin'), and the Esan and Afemai to the southeast. The Igala and other related groups are found in the northeast, and the Egun, Fon, and other Gbe-speaking peoples in the southwest.

The name "Yoruba" is of more recent origin than the concept. It was originally the Hausa name for the Oyo kingdom, meaning "the people of the State of Oyo", and was given a wider

use by missionaries only in the 1840s (Johnson 1921). Oyo was the pre-eminent city-state of the Yoruba between the 16th and 18th centuries, but it was not the only one. The people of the City of Benin speak a closely related language. They also trace the ancestry of the institution of kingship to Ife according to Johnson (1921). Traditionally, Yoruba organized themselves into networks of related villages, towns, and kingdoms, with most of them headed by an *Ọba* (King) or *Baale*; a nobleman or mayor. Kingship is not determined by simple primogeniture, as in most monarchic systems of government. An electoral college of lineage heads is usually charged with selecting a member of one of the royal families, and the selection is usually confirmed by an *Ifá*, a respected oracle.

The Kings live in palaces usually in the centre of the town. Opposite the King's palace is the *Ọja Ọba* (the king's market). Traditionally, at the inauguration of Yoruba cities, is instituted a market opposite the Kings palace. This arrangement made it easier for the king to gather the people for whatever information he had to disseminate. It was a good meeting forum. The markets are therefore named *Ọja Ọba*, (the Kings market). The king's market phenomenon subsists in almost all Yoruba towns and cities as we have in Oyo, Ibadan, Ile-Ife, Modakeke, Osogbo to mention a few. That of Osogbo is renamed at the moment, the King's Square . The markets form an inherent part of Yoruba life. The market traders are well organized, having various guilds, and an elected speaker. The palace and market phenomenon formed the core of the city and development of the city progressed concentrically around the city centre; which is the king's market (Agboola, 2007). It is plausibly also in the early days of Osogbo to be a forum for artisans' and masons' interaction with their clientele for patronage.

The most urbanised Yoruba cities/towns are Ibadan, Abeokuta, Fiditi, Eko (Lagos), Ejigbo, Ijebu Ode, Akure, Ilorin, Ijebu-Igbo, Ogbomoso, Ondo, Ota, Ado-Ekiti, Ikare, Sagamu,

Ikènnè, Ilisan, Inisa, Offa, Iwo, Ilesa, Ilé-Ife, Owo, Ede, Badagry, Owu, Oyo, Orile-Owu, Ilaro, Ago-Iwoye and Osogbo.



Fig. 1 Map of Nigerian States showing Yoruba speaking states.
Source: ADWLab Team5

1.2.2 *The Emergence of Osogbo Town*

The main history of Osogbo is traceable to a point when one businesswoman, who had foresight for a striving community decided to approach the King of Ede then for a piece of real estate along the Oshun River bank. According to Yoruba oral tradition, the adventurer was granted about 20 acres of Ede's real estate to establish her domain. Oral history says she opened a frontier store to accommodate travelers who decided to rest and later proceed with their journey. Osogbo traditionalists believe that the spirit known as "OSO" i.e. "Wizard" from "(I)GBO" i.e. the bushes (along the river Osun) descended one night on the newly settled woman and proclaimed that she should start preparing for something big as the small frontier post is going to be one of the most developed cities in the world. This is how the name "OSO - IGBO" was adopted as "OSOGBO" - the name interpreted as the "spirit from the bush". Because it was a common practice among Yoruba sprawling towns to coronate

their Kings and/or Queens, the woman became the ruler of her new town with the title "The Business woman" of Osogbo; translated the "Ata Oja" of Oshogbo. This title has remained the same for subsequent coronated kings.

1.2.3 Why Osogbo was Chosen

This work is focused on ornamentation in domestic buildings in Osogbo. Osogbo is a Yoruba city in the Southwest Nigeria and the capital of Osun State. The city was chosen for this study because of its cultural richness in the creative and performing arts. It was the home of the late renowned actor and dramatist, Duro Ladipo. His famous plays 'Oba Koso' and 'Moremi' brought him to limelight. There are other urbanized Yoruba cities that may be as rich as or even richer in culture than Osogbo. However, the choice of Osogbo as the study context was inspired by the Ulli Beier initiated and unique Osogbo art school. The school churned out indigenous artists with peculiar art styles and characteristics, such as renowned artists in the persons of the late Taiwo Olaniyi, also known as 'Twin 77', Jimoh Braimoh, Muraina Oyelami, Bisi and Nike to mention a few. There may be other Yoruba towns with artistic backgrounds; none had a formal art school training directed at indigenous talents in the early days of Yoruba civilization as Osogbo which might have impacted the peoples' overall creative awareness which is germane to the study. The focus of this study is an investigation on decorative art works in domestic buildings in-situ. The palpable artistic penchant of the people of Osogbo could therefore presumably be an influential possibility of having a reflection on the ornamentation in buildings. Above all, Osogbo was made a World Heritage Centre by UNESCO in 2005, in recognition of the cultural flexibility of the people, acculturating the late Austrian artist and devotee of the Osun shrine (Susan Wenger, 1915-2009) acceptably as the chief priest of the shrine. It is also known for the 'Oja Oba' Market building, which is the former *Oba's* (King's) palace. Osogbo lies on the railway from Lagos

to Kano and was made a major industrial development centre by the government of Nigeria during the 1970s. Osogbo is a historic Yoruba city; it will not therefore be surprising to identify old motifs of decoration on contemporary buildings in the evolution of ornamentation over time. Modern design motifs of ornamentation are usually an improvement over the ancient. This will be elucidated in the later part of this work.

1.3 Problem Statement

Ornamentation is the process of surface modulation of ornaments on a product, building, human being or any object to enhance its aesthetic value. The history of ornamentation is little known and has been studied by a small number of widely spread scholars. Not only is there much diversity of opinions about it, subsequent discoveries have deprived a good deal of the most brilliant work of its objective value. Scholars, including architects, artists and past researchers had viewed ornamentation fragmentarily as each of them examined the subject from one perspective at a time. Rimmer (1997), for instance, looked at the overall symbolic form of architecture perceptibly from the aesthetic point of view that makes it an artistic piece. Osasona (2007) has dealt with ornamentation in buildings only in relation to folk architecture.

However, ornamentation, in its form, content, and meaning in Osogbo domestic buildings are not known. This study examined ornamentation in domestic buildings within Osogbo including an in-depth study of its form, content and meaning. It equally examined and analysed the existing ornamentation motifs in residential buildings within Osogbo and where they appeared on the buildings. In order to bridge the identified gap in research on the subject matter, which is the essence of this study; a number of research questions were formulated to be addressed as shown in the course of the research.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What are the existing ornamentation motifs in domestic buildings in Osogbo and where on the buildings do they appear?
2. What do these ornamentations symbolize?
3. Who are the patrons and producers of ornamentation in domestic buildings and what values do they associate with them?
4. Have there been any significant changes on the ornamentation in domestic buildings within the city over time?

1.5 Aim

The aim of this study was to examine ornamentation in domestic buildings in Osogbo in relation to form, content and meaning over time.

1.6 Objectives

The objectives were to:

- (i) identify and document the ornamentation in domestic buildings in Osogbo;
- (ii) analyse the ornamentation on these buildings;
- (iii) examine the meaning of ornamentation to the patrons, producers of ornamentation and the people of Osogbo;
- (iv) analyse the changing characteristics of ornamentation in domestic buildings overtime in Osogbo.

1.7 Justification for the Research

There has been very little research on ornamentation in buildings, and few scholarly work have been executed on architectural ornamentation in Osogbo despite its palpable artistic

creativity in addition to the annual Osun Osogbo festival that has earned her a World Heritage Site. This study is therefore complementary to other research endeavours that have focused on contexts other than ornamentation in buildings within Osogbo. This study was necessitated by the need to systematically document and identifies present Yoruba architectural ornamentation history for posterity as well as for future generation as reference point.

1.8 Scope of the Study

There are extant forms of buildings with diverse functions such as office, commercial and hospital buildings, as well as ware houses which mostly do have little or no ornamentation on them. This study primarily identified ornamentation on domestic buildings in the historic Yoruba city of Osogbo and only in the developed parts of the city. This is because the developed parts of the city will have more buildings bearing ornamentation than those in developing areas. Secondly, the study is limited to external ornamentation on domestic buildings. There exist other areas with ornamentation within buildings, such as the living room as well as the dining area, but because of inaccessibility to such areas, the study was restricted to the external context only. Lastly, the study also examined ornamentation on building boundary walls, otherwise known as *fence* of the building. This constitutes a part of the general urban landscape that adds glamour to the overall appearance of the building.

1.9 Summary

This introductory Chapter established the background to the study. It stated the reasons germane to the choice of Osogbo as the study area. This was in affiliation with the

inauguration of the Ulli Beier Art School that sparked up the artistic talents of the indigenes since the research was on the art of ornamentation in buildings. A number of research questions were formulated to be addressed in the study in order to bridge identified gaps in research. Its aim and objectives were fashioned out to identify and document ornamentation in buildings for posterity. The scope of study was limited to the external context of choice buildings and their fences.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The review of literature is built around Yoruba and Osogbo artistic creative cultures, their concept of beauty; what is regarded as beautiful, related issues to ornamentation and the art of decoration in buildings. The review discusses the origin of ornamentation, its characteristics categories and the interface between Art and Architecture. The literature on aspects of Yoruba Ornamentation and Aesthetics will also be a subject of review. Further to be reviewed in literature is the Nigerian brand of Brazilian architecture style.

A cursory examination of Yoruba towns reveals a uniform trend in building designs except for more prominent features of contemporary structures in comparatively more developed urban cities than Osogbo, such as Lagos, Ibadan and Abeokuta. In effect, Yoruba towns and Yoruba in general refer to the common Yoruba history while the literature also recognizes the uniqueness of Osogbo and its artistic heritage. The general literature on Architectural Ornamentation is also reviewed in relation to historical, cultural, social and economic issues. Finally the house building industry in Osogbo will be examined including the process of production as well as the patronage between the builders and their clients.

There have been copious scholarly endeavours on Yoruba culture and people by fairly well critiqued and documented African counterparts (Hallen, 2000, Abiodun, 1983, Lawal, 1974, Borgatti, 1969). Who then are the Yoruba? The Yoruba originated from a people known as the Oyo. They live in Southwest Nigeria and The Republic of Benin. They are known for the development of a myriad of artistic forms including pottery, weaving, beadworks, metal

works, and mask making. Most artwork is made in honor of gods and ancestors. There are more than 401 known gods to the Yoruba. There is much sculpture and artworks made. Consequent to the enormity in the number of gods, the Yoruba have been compared to the ancient Greeks in the number of gods and in the similarities between the structures of the gods. The Yoruba have become quite popular among Africans all over the world and claim Yoruba as their family roots and follow the religion and culture of the people. Many claim they are part of the Diaspora of the Yoruba as slaves. Economically the Yoruba primarily engage in agriculture, with about 15% of the people employed as merchants or artists and craftsman. One of the features that made the Yoruba unique is their tendency to form large city groups instead of small village option. Most of the large cities of Nigeria and Benin are inhabited almost solely by Yoruba.

2.2 Categories of Ornamentation in Residential Buildings

Ornamentation is a specific field, which cuts across cultures and all the Arts. According to Oydegard (2011), it is the Art we add to Forms, by means of shapes and patterns positioned on an object or building for the pleasure of the eye. Most often, ornaments are so familiar and unspecified that they are not taken cognisance of; they can be perceived as the visual equivalent of background music. At some other times they suddenly magnetize our full attention. At the inception of modernism, the use of ornaments was not favoured in the arts and architecture, but they had always been there and now are undoubtedly gaining full recognition consciously or otherwise.

The nature and form of ornamentation may either be in two or three dimensions. A common use of two dimensional application of ornamentation is usually found in wall decorations, floors and ceilings tiles and textiles. Typical of the three dimensional use of ornamentation is found in relief sculpture, or sculpture in the round (free standing figure).

Architects constantly make decisions that involve ornamentation, whether they are integral to the structure or applied elements. There are three basic and fairly distinct categories of ornamentations in architecture, as identified in Encyclopedia Britannica (2008). They are namely: (i) Mimetic or imitative ornamentation, (ii) Applied ornamentation and (iii) Organic ornamentation.

2.2.1 Mimetic or imitative ornamentation

This is a genre of ornamentation that has certain definite meanings or symbolic significance to its cultural origin. This style of ornamentation is only alive when it participates in the culture or civilization that produced it. Over time, it is generally agreed that where a peoples' social and cultural pattern undergo a rapid radical change, then it is considered a period of revolution. However, tradition remains the foundation of the new forms as explained by Rosenbauer (1947).

2.2.2 Applied ornamentation.

This category of ornamentation only adds beauty to a structure and is extrinsic to it. It is an add-on and may or may not be an after-thought in the overall design. The content of architectural ornamentation may take the form of carved stone, wood or precious metals, plaster or clay. This may be impressed onto a surface as applied ornament (Meyer, 1898).

2.2.3 Organic ornamentation'

This taxonomy of ornamentation is inherent in the building's function and materials. In other words, it is embedded and considered originally along with the structure, thereby serving a dual purpose of functionality and embellishment. This phenomenon of functionality and embellishment is exemplified in few of Demas Nwoko's architectural works later discussed

in this section. Nwoko had to initially study Art in order to understand and implement the Art of Architecture explicitly (Godwin and Hopwood, 2007).

Broadly speaking, ornamentation in architectural history experienced two opposing pulls. There was a faction that argued against ornamentation in buildings and another faction approved of it. Ornamentation is an embellishment and its purpose is to heighten excellence. According to (Perret 1930) when it smokescreens a bad design then it is considered a bad ornamentation. Perret further reiterated that most ornamentations fall into this category and the public is deceived as such. Simply put, ornamentation can only be good when it specifically embellishes good design.

The impression that most ornamentation fall into the category of deception to blindfold the public from recognizing a faulty design structure in the perspective of this study is too generalized a statement to be true. The scrutiny of a faulty architectural structure can be visually detected without a plum. A renowned Professor of Art History Abiodun (1978) says

“no amount of shading..., would make a bad drawing, good”.

The application of appropriate tones of chiaroscuro in a drawing gives it an optical illusion of three-dimensionality and renders it pleasing to the eye. In other words, no chiaroscurotic rendering would enhance the beauty or disguise such defect in drawn objects. In the same vein, no application of ornamentation would hide the faulty structure of a building. This research agrees with Huntley’s (1946) view that, ornamentation is not a bad thing; he argued that good ornamentation is good art and any ornamentation that is intended for the obscuration of defect in any artifact or building is bad ornamentation.

2.3 Ornamentation in Architectural History

In architecture, ornamentation is applied embellishment in various styles, that is, a distinguishing characteristic of buildings, furniture, and household items. Ornamentation often occurs on entablatures, columns, the tops of buildings, and around entryways and windows, especially in the form of moldings as shown in the Figure 2.1. Architectural ornament can be carved from stone, wood or precious metals, with plaster or clay, or painted or impressed onto a surface as applied ornament. The same is also referred to as decoration or embellishment to enhance the outlook of a building or any decorated object. Decoration with ornament has been evident in civilizations since the beginning of recorded history, ranging from Ancient Egyptian architecture to the apparent lack of ornament of 20th century Modernist architecture.

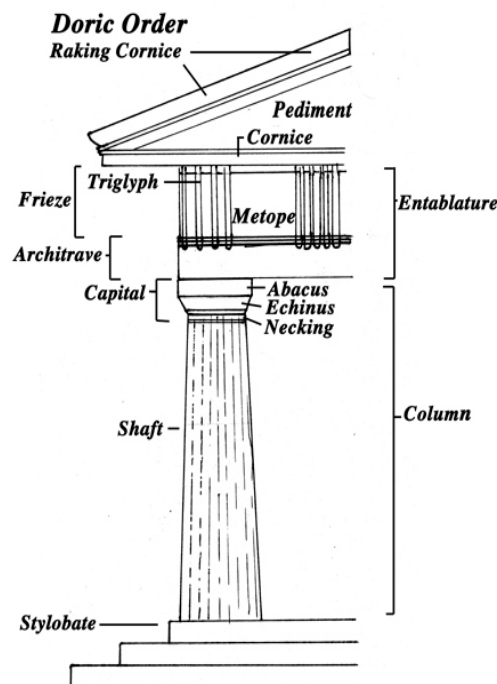


Fig.2.1 Ornamentation Drawing on Building part showing the Column, Entablature and Doric Order

The use and application of ornaments and ornamentation is a global phenomenon. It is a major feature of the *Art Nouveau* and Victorian architecture in the late 19th Century. Art Nouveau is an international movement (Duncan, 1994) and style of art, architecture and applied art, especially the decorative arts that peaked in popularity at the turn of the 20th century between 1890 and 1905 (Sterner, 1982, Duncan, 1994). Art Nouveau was embraced by the vast majority of the people. The name 'Art nouveau' is French for 'new art', pronounced and anglicized 'art nu: 'vou'. Art Nouveau is an approach to design which artists work on everything from architecture to furniture, making art part of everyday life as shown in Plate 2.1. It is characterized by organic, especially floral and other plant-inspired motifs, as well as highly-stylized, flowing curvilinear forms cast in wrought iron or terra-cotta and ranging from organic forms like vines and ivy, to more geometric designs, and interlace, inspired by its Irish design heritage (Duncan, 1994).

The history of ornamentation, particularly in the context of architecture, has been marked by the constant pull of two opposing forces. At one extreme is *horror vacui*, which literally means "fear of the vacuum." This term has been used to characterize the human desire to adorn every blank wall; to give every surface of a building decoration and texture (Waterloo, 2002).

Taken to its logical conclusion, *horror vacui* produces one ostensibly deriving from the European aristocracy, saturated with ornamentation (Huntley, 1946) which to some subjective opinion could be appalling. This probably must have instigated the abolition of ornamentation in architecture by the modernists in the 18th Century.



Plate 2.1: Art Nouveau architecture.: **Source:**

http://images.search.yahoo.com/search/images?_adv_prop=image&fr=ytf1l-&va=art+nouveau+architect-ure

In opposing the use (and abuse) of ornamentation wrought by believers in *horror vacui*, Gombrich (1979) calls the “cult of restraint.” He uses the term to refer to those who reject ornamentation because of its superficiality, and praise objects that convey their essence without the need to advertise it via decoration. The most recent revival of the *cult of restraint* came in the form of the modernist movement in architecture spear headed by Adolf Loos.

The abolition of ornamentation in architecture gave birth to Modern Architecture after the Frank Lloyd Wright’s Prairie house types in the United States of America. The modern typology of houses is void of ornamentation. The Bauhaus in Plate 2.2, initiated by the German architect, Walter Gropius was founded with the idea of creating a "total" work of art in which all arts, including architecture, would eventually be brought together.



Plate 2.2: Gropius Bauhaus House had a rippling effect on modernist architecture and modern designs. **Source:** http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bauhaus#cite_note-archdic-1

The Bauhaus style became one of the most influential currents in Modernist architecture and modern design (Nikolaus, 1999). Modernism had a global influence on architecture. Its influence on architecture in Nigeria in the 70s through 80s was reflective in the adobe, ‘face to face’ and simple flat apartments without decorations.

Ornamentation is evidently still flourishing despite its opposition. The antagonists of ornamentation in architecture either subconsciously or otherwise produced architecture with ornamentation through machine technology and application of modern materials. In corroborating this statement, Venturi (1996) made a fascinating conclusion on the issue:

‘When Modern architects righteously abandoned ornament on buildings, they unconsciously designed buildings that were ornament’. This is evident in the Seagram Building, where Mies van der Rohe installed a series of structurally unnecessary vertical I-beams on the outside of the building, and by 1984 when Philip Johnson produced his AT&T building (Plate 2.3) in Manhattan, USA, with an ornamental pink granite neo-Georgian pediment, the argument of ornamental restraint was effectively over. In retrospect, critics have seen the AT&T building

as the first Postmodernist building (Astronomy, 2009). The argument for or against ornamentation is not the focus of this study, but rather, focused on splendor on the art of ornamentation in architecture with its effect in Yoruba civilization, particularly in Osogbo.

The consideration for modern materials and methods of production has charged designers with new enthusiasm; and it has caused them to reconsider the place of ornament (Huntley 1946) after the cry for the abolition of ornamentation in architecture by the modernists for over three decades. “Form (ever) follows function” was the battle-cry of Modernist architects after the 1930s. This was to discredit and imply that decorative elements, which architects call “ornaments,” were superfluous in modern buildings.



Plate 2.3: The Sony Building (AT&T) in the US, brought an end to the abolition of ornamentation in architecture.

Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>

2.4 Art and Architecture

The relationship between Art and Architecture is germane to the understanding of Architectural ornamentation. They evolved within the same field of enquiry and appeared to be siblings of the same parent in the environmental sciences. Architecture primarily is a creative art. Quite a number of architects had suggested collaborations between the two professions of art and architecture for various reasons. As Melhuish (2002) pointed out, a huge number of practicing architects who view architecture itself as an art, and who long for the kind of liberty the artists enjoy, clamour for collaboration with the artist. Both art and architecture have the penchant for aesthetics. On one hand, the architect demonstrates total artistic freedom, he employs the attribute of the artist's imagination and creativity. On the other hand, creative imagination is not the exclusive reserve of the artist, he makes the difference with his ability to visually express his inspiration and so is the architect in designing building forms. This is a common index between the two professions and goes to suggest that they were admirably intertwined at various points in history.

From extant scanty literature on collaboration between art and architecture, the interface between the two professions is along the terrain of architecture, sculpture and painting but mainly sculpture since it has to do with construction, frame and form. There is, however, the challenge of the level of involvement of the artist in collaboration with the architect. There is the issue of who takes the brief and what will be the dividend sharing formula in the collaboration. Should it be a contractual issue between them? What does the artist have to offer? Is the artist capable of making a contribution which can open up a new perspective to architecture? Or is this something the architect should get himself involved at all? This issue has generated a reverberating debate between the two professions, both for and against.

There is a clear fundamental difference between art and architecture at the level of use. Some collaborating architects with the artist sometimes get stuck. The artist may not share the collaborating architects view, but rather defines his interest as an artist, as the way ideas take up existence in the world as object and space. This is a situation of incompatibility and non-compromise.

Artist, Jaray (2002), in collaboration with the city architects of Birmingham described her interest in and engagement with architecture as being essentially visual and in connection with the ideas of place. She claimed that architecture is one of her main sources of inspiration for 30 years as a painter. Her interest was in the shapes, the colours, the sense of light; all came for her responses to architecture and to a feeling of place. Jaray's collaborative experience with the city architects of Birmingham was possibly at the level of appreciation of their works from which he caught inspiration for his paintings.

The Gerrit Rietveld-Schroeder house and chairs phenomenon is a harmonious collaborative occurrence of Painting and Architecture. These were influenced by Mondrian paintings as shown in Plates 2.4a, b, c, d.

Piet Mondrian's paintings are ensemble of carefully arranged geometrical shapes of squares, rectangles of varying sizes bordered with thick or/and thick lines but, no round forms or diagonals. The only colours used were black, white and gray, plus the primary colours, red, yellow and blue after the order of a Dutch art movement called De Stijl (the Style). His style of painting caught the inspiration of Architect Rietveld and is reflective on the Rietveld-Schroeder architecture. The Rietveld-Schröder House in Utrecht, in The Netherlands was commissioned by late Mrs. Truus Schröder-Schräder (1889-1985), designed by the architect Gerrit Rietveld (1888-1965) and built in 1924.

The Rietveld Schröder House is the manifesto of De Stijl. De stijl was initiated by an influential group of artists and architects who took their name from a periodical founded in 1917. The periodical was devoted to modern neo-Plasticism, and it became the most influential voice for the ideals of modern art and architecture in the Netherlands. Some of the roots of De Stijl can also be found in Frank Lloyd Wright's architecture in the Netherlands in the early 1900s.

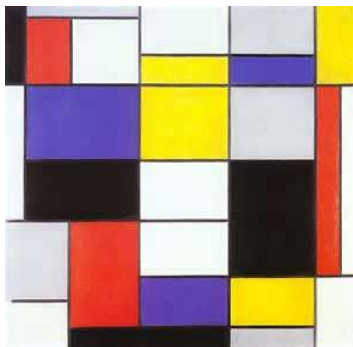


Plate 2.4a: Composition A - Piet Mondrian painting
Source: <http://images.search.yahoo.com> (Rietveld 201)1



Plate 2.4b: Rietveld-Schroeder house de stijl
Source: <http://whc.unesco.org> (Rietveld 201)1.



Plate 2.4c: Gerrit Rietveld-Schroeder house interior- utrecht- Piet 1927- sliding partitions ...
Source: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/965>
(Rietveld, 2011)



Plate 2.4d. Some of Gerrit Rietveld artistically creative chairs with the restrictive colours of the Dutch De Stijl Art Movement. **Source:** <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/965> (Rietveld 2011)

De Stijl group stressed "total abstraction" with respect to what was called "Neo-Plasticism." (UNESCO ABE, 2013). Neo-Plasticism is the 21st Century style of art and architecture in Holland. The De Stijl influence on architecture remained considerable long after 1931; Mies van der Rohe was among the most important proponents of its ideas. The Rietveld-Schroeder house is the only building to have been created completely according to De Stijl principles. Examples of De Stijl-influenced works by J.J.P. Oud can be found in Rotterdam (*Café De Unie*) and Hoek van Holland

The Dutch artists strived for simplicity and sobriety. Rietveld (an architect) was influenced by the ideas of the group. He applied them to his designs and furniture. He tried to create a non-emotional order of beauty. The house he built for Schröder is considered an important example of architecture in accordance with the rules of De Stijl as reflected in Plate 1b. Mondrian was considered the most prominent of the Dutch artists as a result of his strict adherence to 'de stijl' and the volume of his works. The impact of Mondrian's painting on Rietveld-Schroeder's house is exhibited in both the interior and exterior platforms of the house as well as his famous blue and red furniture on the red portion of the floor (Plate 1b &

c). In this instance, the architect, Rietveld just adopted the primary colours on Mondrian's painting to relish his architecture. The reflection is noticeable on the exterior part of the building as observable on the yellow and red railings in addition to hanging poles as spires to the building. The collaboration of Dutch artists and architects appears total as most of their architecture gave allowance for artistic input in their works; reflecting Neo-plasticism in terms of the adoption of the basic primary colours. This is most glaring at the gateway of the country; the Schiphol International Airport, the train stations, the trains and buses, as well as in public buildings.

Bunschta, an architect, was a firm believer in initiating the artist at the beginning of his projects. He successfully engaged Noguchi (Sculptor) so that his contribution became a functional part of the overall design. It was Bunschta's idea to have a sculptor to design the total space adjacent to a building with the aim of humanizing the ground level areas around it. Sensibly therefore, Noguchi contributed his quota in the overall aesthetic enhancement of the building. This collaboration is obviously contractual and complimentary to the overall aesthetic disposition of the building.

Art works on architecture is generally acclaimed as ornamentation, embellishment or add-on for aesthetics. Sometimes, art works are better positioned than add-ons when embedded originally at conception of architectural design. This is reflected in the works of Demas Nwoko, an architect who had a prior certification in art for better understanding and experience of the same before undertaking a study in architecture for distinction. His knowledge and dexterity in art has an exquisite bearing in his design forms. He gave attention to impeccable details and no wall space is left bare as expressed in the main entrance foyer of the Akenzua cultural Centre, Benin (Plate 2.5a). His works glaringly debunk the impression of non-functionality of art forms. Again, at the Dominican Institute Ibadan, Demas's application of individually carved timber columns which base is housed in steel cylinders at

the feet clearly shows functional application in addition to durability of sculpture in architecture. They do not actually carry the slabs but the timber auditorium roof as well as maintain the continuity of internal décor as shown in Plate 2.5b. As Godwin and Hopwood (2007) explained, the building was designed with courage and conviction and has stood well for over 36 years. Its timeless quality underscores its originality.



Plate 2.5a: Main entrance foyer of the Akenzua Cultural Centre, Benin.
Source: Godwin & Hopwood (2007)



Plate 2.5b: Structural Timber Supports: Each column is individually carved and carries only the timber roof structure. **Source:** Godwin & Hopwood (2007)

Fretton (2002) an architect, has designed several galleries and studios for artists and perceives 'art has an intelligence about the ways objects exist politically' while architecture is much less willing to understand it is representing the values of society and the people it is built for'. This statement may be true for the western world where council flats are built for individuals or, houses built by estate developers for outright purchase or lease. It may not likely be applicable to Africans and Nigerians in particular, where individuals crave to exhibit opulence by the magnitude of building they put up for socio-political class in trying to carve a niche for themselves. The same is true of European aristocracy where buildings were heavily ornamented for class distinction.

Fretton admits that architecture is constrained by use and is so compelled to conform with planning and building regulations, briefs drawn up by ill-informed clients, desperate tight budgets, and even aesthetic planning control, of which they long for liberty as the artists do have. He maintains that art has more interesting thought and forms than architecture. Art, it seems can break the rules as architecture is not allowed to do (Melhuish, 2002). Fretton suggests architecture has much to learn from art but fears architects may misinterpret art practice as yet another style and 'eventually architecture will commodify and use up art' as it did with poetry and literature.

Melhuish subtly debunked Fretton's opinion that art has some political inclination unlike architecture. He opines that much art has little or no political content and that if it does, it is not necessarily good. Melhuish remarked, Fretton disregards much of the best architecture produced at this period around the globe. Corroborating the last statement by Melhuish, there exists a class of exotic architectural structures tagged 'unusual architecture'. Their origins were conceived from depths of the wildest imaginative creativity. They are epitome of multi-

tasking functionality, artistic master piece, aesthetics and may or may not be organic in nature. Both artists and architects make reference to nature in emerging with originality of designs. This is found in three selected paradigms illustrated below. These three examples were selected based on their unique forms unlike other regular buildings with four elevations. They are David Fisher's rotating tower in Dubai, which inspiration came from the shape of sun-flower. The second archetype is the Oscar Niemeyer's museum of contemporary Arts, in Niteroi, Brazil and lastly, the Catholic Church of Transfiguration, at Lekki in Lagos, Nigeria by DOS architects.

Fisher is the visionary architect and creator of the world's first building in motion as in Plate 2.6a. The revolutionary Dynamic Tower, completed in 2010, is the first skyscraper to be entirely constructed in a factory from prefabricated parts. It consists of offices, a luxury hotel, residential apartments complete with a parking space inside the apartment and the top 10 floors are luxury villas. The building adjusts itself to the sun, wind, weather and views by rotating each floor separately. This building will never appear exactly the same form twice in a day as reflected in Plate 2.6b.



Plate 2.6a. The Rotating Tower in Dubai; A break from conventional architecture
Source: Fisher 2010



Plate 2.6b: The Rotating Building does not assume the same shape twice in a day
Source: Fisher 2010

It is amazing that the occupant of an apartment in the 80 floor structure has the choice of waking up to sunrise in his bedroom and enjoying sunsets over the ocean at dinner as reflected in Plate 2.6c. Each floor and apartment has its own car park as reflected in Plates 2.6d and 2.6e. In addition to being such an incredible engineering miracle it produces energy for itself and even for other buildings because it has wind turbines fitted between each rotating floor. By implication the 80-storey building has up to 79 wind turbines, making it a true green power plant. This indeed is an exclusive master piece breaking the rules of architecture yet fulfilling the objective of shelter that a building portends to achieve.

ECOLOGICAL BUILDING



Plate 2.6c. Living in the rotating Tower, the occupant could wake up to sunrise in his bedroom and enjoying sunsets over the ocean at dinner.
Source: Fisher 2010



Plates.2.6d : Each floor has its car pack. This Plate shows the transportation of a car to its owner's floor. **Source:** Fisher 2010



Plate 2.6e: Each apartment has its car park on all floors
Source: Fisher 2010

Second in the series of the selected ‘unusual architecture’ is the Museum of contemporary Arts by Architect Oscar Niemeyer, in Brazil (Plate 2.7).



Plate 2.7 A view of Oscar Niemeyer's Contemporary Art Museum (MAC) in Niterói city near Rio de Janeiro. Photograph: Sergio Moraes/Reuters
Source: guardian.co.uk.2012/dec/07/

The appearance of the museum of contemporary Arts assumes the form of a red Tulip (flower) or a wine goblet. Oscar's biomorphic forms were inspired in part by Picasso and Arp

(Artists), but also by the baroque inheritance in Brazil. For him, architecture occurred spontaneously as a flower. Also in the words of its creator, the museum emerges like a flower in the rock that holds them. Created from a revolutionary figure of double curvature, the Museum stands right beside the Guambara beach. The modernist structure with circular lines and saucer-shaped, has sometimes been likened to an Unidentified Flying Object (UFO). The structure rests on a water source where the flying saucer appears white, pretending to be suspended in the air.

The last prototype of the ‘unusual architecture’ is the Catholic Church of Transfiguration, at Lekki in Lagos, Nigeria by DOS architects in Plate 2.8. The gigantic catholic church of transfiguration building may look contemporary; but it is intrinsically based on traditional principles of traditional Catholic Church design. As such, the main congregation hall features



Plate 2.8: Façade of the 2000 seater Catholic Church of Transfiguration at Lekki, Nigeria
Source: <http://www.topboxdesign.com/catholic-church-of-transfiguration-in-lekki-nigeria/>

a Latin cross above the Organ and altar; the hall has a nave and two isles at each side which are all coincident with the main axis of the Church. The structure consists of an organic skin

which, in one single position, becomes the roof and external walls of the Church, with the intention of enveloping and protecting the Congregation within. The overall outlook of the chapel building depicts a combination of two creatures from nature. The façade and front elevation has the resemblance of an open mouthed crocodile, positioned to trap its prey. The remaining part of the roof/body from the apex of the apparent crocky mouth towards the back of the structure assumes the ‘pupa’ stage of the butterfly metamorphosis. The main access is placed in the narrowest and lowest part of the building and leads into a spectacular entrance foyer, from which the visitor has views and clear access to both floors of the Church.

The main staircase in the entrance foyer divides the Church into two halves which are visually linked by the large atrium that traverses the building. The impressive glazed facades on both the East and western axis of the Church provide natural lighting and emphasise the height and scale of both areas of worship.

The aesthetically functional design comfortably seats a 2,000 congregation in a naturally-lit, well-ventilated interior, offering excellent acoustics and a clear view of the altar for all worshippers with no obstructive columns. Supplementarily, a mother-care/crèche area for 30 people provides a community-focused approach; with a clear glass partition to enable parents continue their worship uninterrupted with a direct view of their children. The crèche provision and positioning is intuitive. It equally reflects the architect’s psycho-social responsibility at the design stage of brain-storming on one hand, as well as the tongue of the crocodile from the visual intelligence of the artist on the other (Plate 11). The floor plan of the church of Transfiguration is shown in Figure 2.2

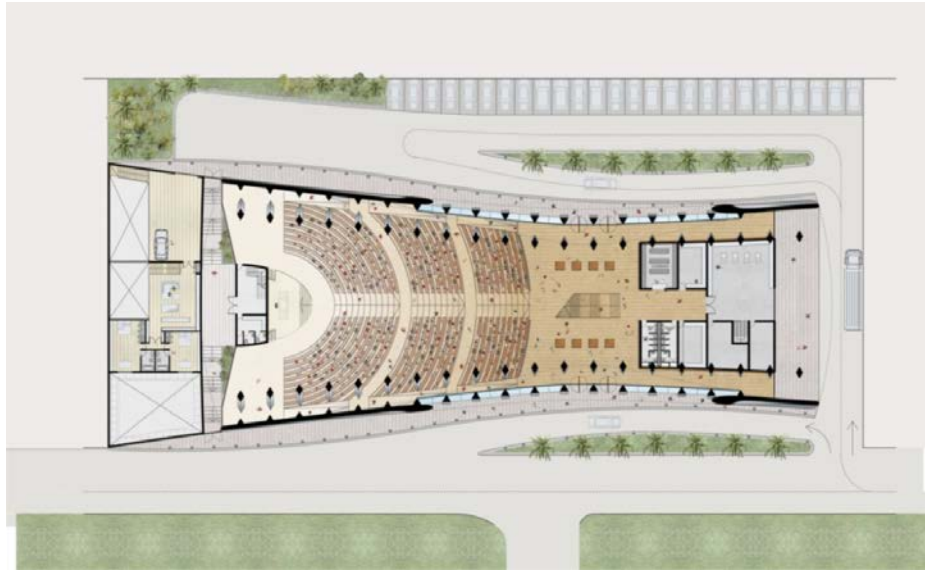


Fig 2.2. Floor Plan of the Church of Resurrection at Lekki, Lagos

Source:

<http://www.worldarchitecturenews.com/index.php?fuseaction=wanappln.showprojectbigimages>

2.4.1 *Space and Aesthetics in architecture*

Philip Johnson coined out an observatory statement on architecture in the New York Times of 1964; and I quote, “Architecture is the Art of wasting space beautifully”. The use of wasted space in Architecture following the quote is ironically utilized. The use of apparent waste of space in architecture is basically for simplicity and aesthetics usually found in modern in addition to contemporary architecture designs. These spaces are for functional and effective ventilation, relaxation, as well as added aesthetics for overall appeal in addition to a satisfactory outlook. The building in Plate 2.9, is the Faculty of Administration at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife. It is a massive visual ‘V’ shaped form (so it appears with the positioning of the columns) with vast space underneath, seemingly unutilized. Structurally, the space accommodates the beams and columns on which the building stands. It has some articulately positioned concrete circular seats for relaxation and students’ interactive sessions. It allows two major stair cases almost at both ends of the building giving access to two other floors. Obviously, it is not a wasted space after all but adhered credibility

to the art of architecture consonant with *form follows function* according to Louis Sullivan's phrase.

Similarities were drawn again in times past when abstraction in paintings began to bear geometric shapes, lines and strokes identical to architecture floor plans. This was evident in paintings of Pablo Picasso, Theo van Doesburg, and other abstract painters. Fig. 2.3 shows Van Doesburg and Kasimir Malevich paintings as typical illustrations. Observation shows the reflection of the elements of architecture in abstract painting (art).



Plate 2.9 Faculty of Administration Building, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife.
Source: Author's Collection

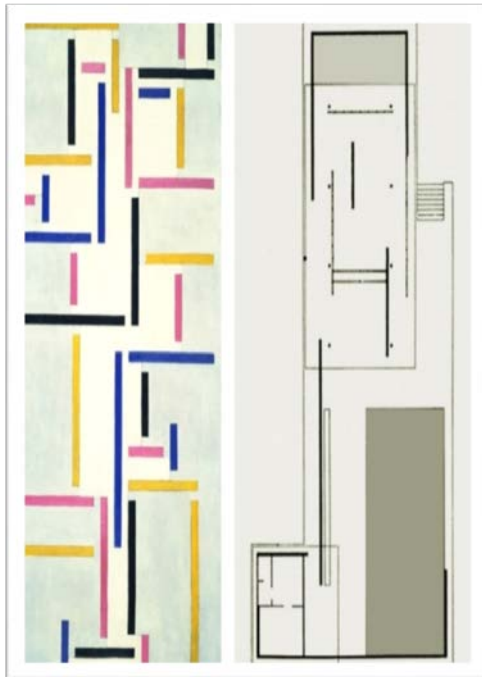


Fig 2.3. Plan for the Barcelona Pavilion, by Mies van der Rohe (1927):
Source:google.com

In the past, there was no separation between art and architecture. Michealangelo and Brunelleschi are the most famous examples; Michaelangelo was an Italian sculptor, painter, architect, poet, and engineer of the High Renaissance who exerted an unparalleled influence on the development of Western art, while Brunelleschi was one of the foremost architects and engineers of the Italian Renaissance. They collaborated smoothly and effectively, but many artists did both. This was unthinkable, in former times, to construct a major building without including art as an integral component (Werby, 1997). It was once thought that architecture, sculpture, and painting appear to belong to the same league. As such, it is most convenient for both artists and architects to locate their bearings on either side to some extent. It is a common place to have artists procure some intellectual exercise in architecture and completely switch over into the architecture profession and vice versa. The renowned French architect, Le Corbusier for instance had the flair for visual art before he trained as an architect.

Today, it is very rare to find these three arts (architecture, sculpture and painting) united in any but the most tentative way. Their separation ironically, perhaps, enabled them to influence one another in ways they never did. Such influences or need for one another's expertise is traceable to the great painter and sculptor master, Michaelangelo. His expressive style exhibited artistic realism. His human figures were proportionate to real life standardization. The most celebrated of Michaelangelo's work is the ceiling in the *Sistine Chapel*. It took him three years to execute the commissioned work from inception to the final unveiling of the master piece. The painting was a massive ten thousand feet of vault surface. Its theme is Biblical; *the Creation of Man*. It tells the visual story of Man's creation, his fall, his final redemption and triumph. This vast story is told in the form of a decoration. So that the poetic designs, the dramatic expositions, the tragic figures are in reality subsidiary parts of architectonic divisions and ornamental setting. The walls of the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican already had ornamentation by various masters whose works remain. Angelo executed another thematic wall-painting above the altar in the same Chapel titled *The Judgment*, whose theme was the inspiration of the Pope himself. In Nigeria, churches built in the early seventies and eighties bear this paradigm of altar and wall paintings. Some of these works still remain. Contemporarily, the phenomenon of ornamentation of event *rendezvous* and Church has changed to a prevalent artistic use of lengthy metres of drapery with a hybrid of designs and shapes. This plausibly was adopted for its ease of manipulation, convenience and flexibility in putting up different design outlook as occasion demands. The drapery form of ornamentation in architecture is accomplished by artists, architects and those who neither have formal training in art nor architecture but do have artistic inclinations and aesthetic sense. Some do it pleurably for self-esteem and accomplishment while others do for economic gains. The former eventually usually opt for minimal financial takings on

experiencing the rigours accompanying its execution. The culture of framed wall paintings subsists in homes and corporate public places.

It is equally note worthy to consider the input of the sculptor in link with the architect in consolidating the artistry of a building. Sculptural pieces could be in the *round* or *relief*. A piece of sculpture in the *round* is a free standing piece while the *relief* sculpture is engraved on a surface either on hard wood, stone, or any other suitable medium. In architecture, the effort of the sculptor is noticeable on the ceiling in addition to doors. Sculpture or carvings on ceilings is not a common phenomenon in the Yoruba setting. However, the development of the cast technology has engendered multiplicity of designs and its mass production for the ceiling as well as wall aesthetics. Contemporarily, the use of plastic (premature ventricular conjunction (PVC)) in addition to the Plaster of Paris, (POP) has made this possible with utmost ease.

The relationship between art and architecture, it is observed from literature and practice that both the artist and architect are endowed with imaginative skills and may or may not choose to work together. They are both trained to create and appreciate forms and aesthetics. Just as two heads are better than one, it is inspiring and highly profitable in the aesthetic sense if the two professionals come together notwithstanding their independent approaches when at a crossroad at the level of use. The artist cannot design and build just as the architect cannot sculpt or paint, though paint is a common medium in both professions. Despite the apparent extent of common grounds between artists and architects, it has proved not particularly easy to synthesis collaborations, even in cases where there seems to be common interest and goal. A plausible collaboration between the two professionals is perceptible in visual appreciation that may influence each other's works. It is equally possible where an artist is invited to compliment his artistry with architecture in the context of sculptural embellishment or applied ornamentation on columns and window frames as found in contemporary buildings. It

is noteworthy, that contemporary technology has produced diverse building materials which have added unfathomable glamour, taste and class to architecture.

2.4.2 Yoruba Aesthetics and Ornamentation

It is appropriate to elucidate the concept of Yoruba art and aesthetic decorations as well as what Yoruba regard as beautiful. According to Riedel (1998), aesthetics is commonly perceived as the study of sensory or senso-emotional values, sometimes called judgments of sentiment and taste. In general terms, scholars in the field define aesthetics as "a critical reflection on art, culture and nature. Aesthetics comes from the Greek word for "sense of perception" and can be defined only within particular cultural systems (Cordwell, 1983).

2.4.2.1. *Yoruba Perception of the Human Character as Beauty*

In Yoruba aesthetic context, it is fundamental to ask the following questions. 'What does Yoruba consider aesthetic or beautiful'? 'How and why have aesthetic concepts come to hold value'? Answers to these questions will provide concise and appreciable insight to the Yoruba artistic inclinations and creative values.

For this to be achieved, a researcher would need to consult a cultural insider to ascertain some Yoruba concept of aesthetics, in addition to how and why it has come to hold value. This is what Barry Hallen (a philosopher) embarked on as a participant observer for several years in collaboration with his graduate student and colleague who happens to be a Yoruba indigene and consulted an *onisekun* (herbalist) deep down in a village in Ekiti State, South West of Nigeria. His limitation (language barrier) became the key to his methodology (learning the language to communicate with the *onisekun*). His findings on Yoruba aesthetics and the concept of beauty in Yoruba was corroborated by other art historians in the field of

African Art such as Lawal (1974) and Abiodun (1990) and Thompson (Philosopher) (1971, 1973).

Yoruba aesthetic concept surpasses superficial facade decoration but reaches far into moral, good character and spiritual realms. Studies have shown that Yoruba philosophy reveals how and why their varied arts look and do things the ways they do. Morality is linked with the aesthetic in everyday Yoruba discourse. Studies have shown (Lawal, 1974, Cordwell, 1983, Hallen, 1997) that Yoruba believe the purest and highest form of beauty, or '*ewa*', in humans is a good moral character, or *iwa rere*. This preference for a beauty, or *ewa* that is 'moral' or an 'inner trait' is summed up by the Yoruba aphorism '*Iwa l'ewa*', meaning 'good moral character is beauty' (Hallen, 1997).

A rational analysis of aesthetic values in Yoruba culture appears to be an alternative possibility worth exploring. Its term of reference borders emphatically on human beings or persons, as against art and crafts (Hallen, 2000, Lawal, 1974) or anything near exhibitable artifacts found in the well-lit vitrines of Western galleries (Doris, 2009). Their aesthetic concepts reach into moral and spiritual realms. Linguistic exploration of Yoruba aesthetic terms finds that words for beauty (*ewa*) and goodness (*dara*) often intersect. An illustration of this is found in ordinary language, everyday day usage is *Iwa rere l'eso enia* meaning good character is one's ornament and beauty (Delano, 1992), character therefore, affords everyone an equal opportunity of living up to a moral ideal in order to be fully admired (Lawal, 1974). Thus in Yoruba culture, *ewa* is synonymous with 'iwa'. What lacks *ewa* is simply bad or *buru*. The physically ugly female 'lacks beauty' or *oburewa* while her male counterpart is simply 'not good' or *eni ti ko dara* (Lawal 1974). Conversely, a physically attractive person with a bad character runs the risk of being stigmatized an *awobo'wa*, that is "the outward beauty, smoke screens the inward rottenness". When the physical beauty of an *awobo'wa*

attracts attention, the initial admiration will disappear as the inner ugliness of such individual manifests itself like smoke. This phenomenon leads us to another linguistic expression that says “Eefi ni iwa” which means one’s character is like smoke and cannot be concealed with body adornment (Lawal 1974). On the other hand, someone with a pleasant disposition has the potential of transforming the not too attractive appearance into a likeable person, or into what the Yoruba call an *omoluwabi*, that is, a role model or “the good-natured and internally beautiful person. *Omoluabi* is a shortened form of *Omo ti Oluwa bi*, in other words, someone born of God and Godlike in nature. It is presumably understood here that God is good and loving; whoever is born of God has God’s nature and should be transparently honest as well as sincere.

It can be inferred from the foregoing that the essence of Yoruba aesthetics and why it has come to hold value is that it engenders self discipline as well as good name (*omoluabi*) and moral behavior. It is the key to social mobility, for sustainable humane societal culture generating good behaviour as the contrary is stigmatized with a bad (*buruku*) name.

Iwa (character), is also perceptible to those who have "under studied and walked with the elders and ancestors" and thus acquired critical and discerning eyes. Important to *iwa* are *oju-inu*, an "inner eye" or the artist's insight, and *oju-ona*, the external harmony of artworks and sensitivity for taste. To the Yoruba, the beauty of objects, performances, or texts lies not only in what catches the eye but also in the derivatives from wholeness of the work in addition to its function.

2.5 Yoruba Aesthetic Expressions

2.5.1. The Yoruba Aesthetic Linguistic Expression

Almost all Yoruba endeavours exhibit as well as express aesthetic connotations; the linguistic expressions, the art of body ornamentation, and scarification. The crave for artistic creativity

is reflective on their architectural decoration. The Yoruba culture is very rich in metaphoric coinage of words to describe as well as express specific situations and circumstances. This they call words of "wisdom" contained in the collection of proverbs. Such expressions are adopted to emphasise crucial points; just as decorations on doors and doorways attract attention to the entrance of the house. Proverbial expression in itself is aesthetic. The well known proverb 'iwa l'ewa' for instance is a long and important phrase in Yoruba aesthetic studies. It has been translated to mean "Character is beauty," suggesting that it is the essence of the thing, and not its pleasing appearance as such, that constitutes "beauty" (Hallen, 2000). It is right to point out that iwa, "character," is not only absolutely inherent by the individual subject (or thing); it is known to others because it is behaved, it is performed and engaged within a social frame.

Another remarkable linguistic aesthetic genre of the Yoruba language is the metaphoric application of certain words as *Aje* (witch) or *Iwin* (wizard) to describe a genius of a person, a super being (non-diabolic) with the product of innate ability or native intelligence above others. The term intellectual is of the book in Western culture and does not provide for a comfortable cross-cultural frame of reference according to Hallen (2000). He, however, deduced in the Yoruba context that if "intellect" as a term is also used to refer to cognition, to the power of human understanding, certainly the *Aje* exercises these in a superior manner with all that implies about 'knowing and believing' in relation to ordinary persons. The craftiness and exceptional traits of such individual earn him this spectacular title *iwin or aje*. Vogel (1993) noted that linguistic exploration of African aesthetic terms reveal that words for beauty and goodness often intersect. For example, almost any social encounter is artistically structured. The first greeting thrown out to a friend sets the stage and signals the type of conversation it is to be, with tacit rules to be honored. Poetic similes, knowledgeable allusions to proverbs and riddles, and other devices thrown casually into conversations are

used to point up a discussion and give one party a seeming educational vantage point over another Cordwell (1983).

In essence, aesthetic and creative instincts are inherent in the Yoruba and would always find expression in almost all their endeavours including architectural decorations.

2.5.2. *Body Ornamentation as Aesthetic Expression*

Yoruba body art uses the human body as a way to express an individual's status, spiritual beliefs, or ethnic affiliation and identification. It can be created on the body itself in the form of tattoos, scarification, body painting, or coiffures. Decorative markings in the form of tattoos, on the face and body scarification (*Ikola Oju ati Ara*) are common amongst the Yoruba. The face, abdomen and arms are common locations on the body for these decorative markings. Unlike in other racial groups, black is the only colour adopted. The pigment is usually carbon in the form of burnt organic materials, usually from plants (Adekunle *et al*, 2006). Scarification is a long and painful process, and a permanent modification of the body. It conveys complex messages about the identity and social status of the individual. Permanent body markings emphasise fixed social, political and religious roles. Facial scarification in Yoruba is used for identification of ethnic groups, families, individuals, but also to express personal beauty. It is also performed on girls to mark stages of the life process, such as puberty, marriage, and other things of the nature. It can assist in making them more attractive to men, as the scars are regarded as appealing to touch as well as to look at, but also as testimony that women will be able to withstand the pain of childbirth with raised scars.

Scarification can be regarded as a boundary marker in terms of life stages, but also as an accepted cultural differentiator between the self and the other, or the civilized self and the natural self. As Vogel states, "Scarification and other forms of body decoration were traditionally considered marks of civilization. They distinguished the civilized, socialized

human body from the body in its natural state and from animals." (Vogel, 1986). Facial marks (*ikola oju*) on both men and women were regarded as a means of beautification in addition to being a differentiator within the Yoruba enclave (Plate 2.10). Facial marks were equally regarded as a means of identification especially in times of war. However, the art of scarification appears to tend towards extinction as scarification patterns can now be seen only on the elderly as explained by Coleman (2003).



Plate.2.10. Yoruba Facial Scarification for purpose of beauty and Identification. **Source:** Retrieved from <http://images.search.yahoo.com/search=Yoruba+scarification+marks> .

Body ornamentation and Body art are furthermore created for wearing on the body in form of garments, jewelry in addition to make-up. Today, many Yoruba embrace a variety of traditional forms of body adornment, creating a sumptuous visual display and turning each decorated person into a vibrant and unique work of art as shown in Plates 2.11a,b,c, 2.12a and 2.12b



Plate 2.11a. Fashionable Yoruba Ladies elegantly dressed in *Aso Ebi* at a function. Ijebu-Remo Area of Ogun State. **Source:** <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3335851>



Plate 2.11b: Yoruba Man's Gown. Strip-Weaving With Embroidery. May Weber Foundation
Source: Cordwell (1983)



Plate 2.11c: Yoruba Men's Gown Gbariye, Houlberg Collection. Source: Cordwell (1983)

Yoruba have atypical traditional clothes – *Aso-ibile*, of various types and shades that make them distinct from other cultures. Both male and female have different types and it is considered a misfit for a man to wear a woman's clothes and vice versa. Before the incursion of the Europeans to the Yoruba land, only hand woven clothes were available. The Yoruba initially had *ibante* (a piece of thick hand woven cloth) used for covering the private parts males and females alike. *Ibante* is made from a type of thick cloth called *kijipa* (a tarpauline–

like material) such as can withstand any stress. They later on evolved to wearing normal cloth that is made from *aso-oke*. Some of these types of *aso-oke* materials include *etu*, *petuje*, *sanyan*, *alaari* and so on. For men's wear, they have *buba*, *esiki* and *sapara*, which are regarded as *ewu awotele* (under wear), while they also have *dandogo*, *agbada*, *gbariye*, *sulia* and *oyala*, which are also known as *ewu awoleke* or an over wear as shown in Plate 2.12b.



Plate 2.12a. Yoruba Abeti Aja–(Dog's ear style hat) www.africastyles.com



Plate 2.12b. Yoruba Man's Sanyan in red-camwood colour with a lightly embroidered cap and awotele (underwear) **Source:** <http://badminton-corse.com/yoruba-dressing>

The Yoruba also have various types of *sokoto* or native trousers that are worn alongside the above-mentioned dresses. Some of these are *kembe*, *gbanu*, *sooro*, *kamu*, *sokoto elemu*, etc. The Yoruba man's dressing is incomplete without a cap. Some of which include, *Gobi*, *tinko*, *abeti-aja*, *alagbaa*, *bentigoo*, *onide*, and *labankada*. These dresses and caps are mostly made from Aso-oke or ofi (same material). The tailors and/or fashion designers have various styles and patterns of embroidery applied on the attires and caps. This in effect adds to the aesthetics and uniqueness of the wears and the persons putting them on as shown in Plates

2.12a. It should be noted that the use of under wears, pants, brassiere etc; is a cross cultural influence of the western world on Yoruba in particular and Nigeria as a whole.



Plate 2.13: Yoruba woman in full traditional wear.
Source: <http://badminton-corse.com/yoruba-dressing>

Yoruba women are fashionable as well as have different types of dresses for body adornment. The most commonly used are *iro* coupled with *buba* or wrapper with a blouse-like loose top, which sleeve is long and almost covering the wrist (traditionally called '*towobobe*'). They always have *gele* or head gear that must be put in place to compliment the *iro and buba* outfit, just as men's hat is important to their traditional *buba* and *sokoto*.

A woman's dressing is incomplete without the *gele*. Gele is wound twice round the head and knotted with the loose ends tucked in for firmness.

Tying a *gele* could be laborious but comes out ostentatiously well (Plate 2.13). The material of the *gele* may be of plain cloth such as *Ankara* or costly guinea brocade and *aso-oke* as may be affordable. The *Ankara* material comes up as turban form on a woman. Only the hard stuffs (brocade and *aso-oke*) give the flamboyant outlook. In addition to this, Yoruba women have *iborun* or *ipele*. *Ipele* is like a miniature wrapper that is hung on the left shoulder as reflected in plate 18. Yoruba women are stylishly creative; some other times, the *ipele* is tied round their waists over the wrapper. The phenomenon of dressing as body ornamentation is appraised as well as the person eulogized especially when it is good on the head with the Yoruba proverb; *Gele o dun bi ka mo we, ka mo we o pe ko yenì*, meaning the head tie is not as good as knowing how it is tied, knowing how to tie it does not mean it is befitting.

The general notion for body ornamentation in Yoruba women is basically to look good and attractive. One of the myths of contemporary culture is that attractiveness is the key to success - anyone can become materially, psychologically, and socially happy once a certain level of attractiveness is achieved. Many believe in the truth of the proposition that looking good enhances good health, self confidence and satisfaction in their attempts to improve their appearance. Looking good and attractive lifts the spirit and makes one feel good but this is merely a psychological phenomenon.

2.5.3 Yoruba Art and Craft

As regards other areas of ornamentation applications by the Yoruba, this ethnic group is endowed with a whole world of talents such as weavers, tailors, potters, goldsmiths, brass casters, carpenters, calabash carvers and carvers to mention a few. Each of these groups thrive successfully in their vocations. Their vocations are made to achieve posterity by reason of apprenticeship from generation to generation. The apprentice under training go through the vocation for a period of three to five years depending on how fast the trainee is able to grasp

the proficiency and competence of his vocation while in training. The exemplified vocations in Plates 2.14a-d are the pottery and calabash carvings respectively.



Plate 2.14a and b. Decorated Yoruba Ceramic Pot; **Plate 2.14b**

Source: www.ceramic4us.com http://images.search.yahoo.com/search/images?_adv_prop=image&fr=ytff1-&va=Yoruba+traditional+pots



Plate 2.14c. Pots of different sizes for different Uses. **Source:** www.ceramic4us.com

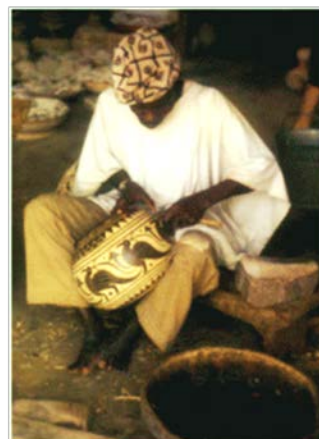


Plate 2.14d: A Yoruba Calabash Carver Adding Value to the Object.

Source: Hearst Museum of Anthropology.

2.5.4 Yoruba Carved Doors

Traditionally, door carving and location of such doors signify distinct considerations of rank and prestige. Elaborately carved and brightly painted doors, house-posts and sculptured mud murals were often found in the compounds of kings, chiefs and wealthy men of Yoruba society (Borgatti, 1969). The door carvings are usually done with hard wood in order to resist wood worms and other destructive insects. A carved door may wholly bear just a single image or have from four to five compartments depending on the height of the door. Each

compartment contains a narrative scene, carved in relief and framed by a border of lattice-work pattern. The thematic expressions of such narrative scenes illustrate aspects of Yoruba daily life, such as marketing, hunting, hawking and others; while some others are historical in disposition. Example of this is shown in Plate 2.15. Ornamentation on doors is a matter of taste as well as economic enablement. It is no longer restrictive to the Monarchs. Especially, with variants of door designs both functional in addition to aesthetic for architectural finish. There are beautifully manufactured security doors for homes and offices.



Plate 2.15. Carved doors of the African Room at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. by the Late Lamidi Fakeye (1928-2009) **Source:** <http://www.nairaland.com/770881/art-architecture-yorubaland/3>

2.6 The cultural profile and Art in Oshogbo

The cultural profile of Osogbo is reflective in the thematic expression in the works of art. In Probst (2011), one of the first authentic, indigenous expressions of Yoruba cultural activities emerged in Osogbo in the early 1960's, through Duro Ladipo by the help of Ulli Beier. It came to be known as "the Oshogbo Movement" or simply as "the Oshogbo artists. From inception, the Oshogbo Movement divided itself into "secular" and "sacred" artists. The

pioneers of the secular artists included Jacob Afolabi, Rufus Ogundele, Jimoh Buraimoh, Muraina Oyelami, Adebisi Fabunmi, Twins Seven Seven, and others. Some of the most successful among them began their careers in workshops taught by a British artist, Georgina Betz (Beier's second wife). Initially their work found an audience largely through Beier's skillful promotion and the support of expatriates like Jean Kennedy (Wolford) who initiated a weekly open house at her home in Lagos to introduce artists and their work to collectors. The "sacred" art on one hand and on the other, was dedication to the restoration of the Oshun Grove under the direction of Susanne Wenger. The art works were specially and permanently made for the Grove. Artists who worked with her were Adebisi Akanji, Sangodare, Ojewale, and Buraimoh Gbadamosi among others. There was no hard and fast distinction between the sacred and secular artists, but they clearly knew themselves (Scott, 2012).

A careful study of their artistic creations is basically in abstracted painting, sculpture and textiles – dyeing. Also classified in the taxonomy of textile is another creative vocation of the art of weaving. These arts (painting and sculpture) developed under the tutelage and supervision of Ulli Beier and Susan Wenger, by the inauguration of an informal art school. The inspiration behind the art school though serendipitous; that is, making unexpected discoveries from the indigenous talents, projected Osogbo to a global limelight and tourist attraction. The result was a synthesis between Yoruba tradition and the modern world; the Oshogbo School heralded the birth of contemporary African art. The emergence of Osogbo art style by artisans turned artists replicated copious and new generation (formally and informally trained) artists within Nigeria and Germany by the establishment of the 'Iwalewa' Haus – an African Art centre in Germany (Agozino, 2009) as well as far away in Papua New Guinea where artists' works bear an uncanny resemblance in style and motif to the Osogbo

artists - Jimoh Buraimoh and Taiwo Olaniyi, known as Twins Seven-Seven (Nevadomsky, 2011).

Ulli Beier made a tremendous impact on the art of Osogbo with his ex-wife, Susan Wenger. Their short-lived marriage was that of convenience. They parted ways because Susan was deep in her vision for Yoruba metaphysics – the traditional religion and its mythology. She later got married to a polygamous Chief who gave her security and freedom to enhance her focus and energy on the Osun groove according to Nevadomsky (2011). Susan worked primarily in close contact with two artists, Adebisi Akanji and Bintu Lamidi who interpreted Yoruba religion in shrine and sculpture made from concrete.



Plate2.16: Batik artwork.

Source: <http://nikeart.com/arts.htm>

Beier and Wenger were instrumental to the global recognition and re-authentication of the Osun groove, the extant art style, traditional religion, economic and socio-cultural status-quo of Osogbo as a World heritage and tourist centre. According to him, Beier and Wenger, had arrived Nigeria in the 1950's and settled in Osogbo where, apart from their job in the university (Ibadan), they engaged in a lot of community services which involved the culture of the natives. Beier pursued a career in contemporary art and drama contrary to Wenger's

zeal for mystics of the traditional religion that instigated their separation. Susan later got married to a traditional drummer, Lasisi. Beier married the British-born artist, Georgina (Betz) Beier. Georgina actually conducted the second phase of the experimental art workshop in August 1964 at Osogbo with 30 participants. What plausibly distinguished this workshop from others was the fact that the participants had no previous formal art training. Beier and Georgina were not manipulators distorting cultural purity, but motivated participants in creating a new and relevant expression of post-colonial Yoruba culture. The artists were virtually left to their own wits and ingenuity. The workshop basically encouraged them to awaken their hidden creative instincts as reflected in Plate 2.16. Georgina identified, encouraged and impressed total freedom on the young talented artists, to express their ideas as well as being individualistic. Their first expressions of visual art clearly represented interpretations of the music, festivals, choreography and other images of the theater. These themes constitute the basis for most Osogbo art works beside regular day to day activities such as the expression of their deities, gods, hunters, palm-wine tapper and other folkloric titles. This peculiar form of orientation in the workshop sparked up the hidden creative treasures in them. Twins Seven Seven was the first to develop his own style in pen-on-canvas. Muraina Oyelami used roller-on-spam board, while Bisi utilized print making. Jimoh Buraimoh found his style in bead art mosaic. Most of these works are executed in mixed media which is the bane of Osogbo art style (paintings). Curiously, it was on account of their childlike expressions derisively dubbed “naive” by the formally-trained artists that they became a major aesthetic force in the contemporary Nigerian art scene (Uwaezuoke, 2011). Today, there is no dichotomy between the informally trained Osogbo artists and other formally trained ones whose works evoke Osogbo art.

A particularly notable ingenious artistic creation in Osogbo is the art of textile material dyeing. Osogbo, sometimes called *Ilu Aro* (home of dyeing), is a major dyeing center. This

traditional industry is one of the major industries of Osogbo. The three common types of textile or fabric dyeing are 'Batik', 'Wax' in addition to 'Tie and Die' otherwise known as *adire eleko*. Fabric dyeing exhibits the originality and ingenuity of the men and women engaged in its creativity. The varied unique designs project the culture of the people. Worthy of reference in this area is a distinguished female artist who has performed a global feat. She is the world acclaimed Nike Okundaye. Nike owns a gallery and school in Oshogbo. She emerged from Twins Seven Seven's studio. She is the most ambitious and innovative in training young artists. The Niké Centre developed a complete curriculum based on the principles of the Yoruba tradition of indigo textiles and the Oshogbo style. Nike has had over 102 solo art exhibitions and 36 group others in Nigeria and abroad in her artistic life.

The Nike Center for Art and Culture, Osogbo, now admits undergraduate students from many universities in Nigeria for industrial training programme in textile design. Over the years, this center has admitted and still admits students from Europe, Canada and the United States of America. International scholars and other researchers in traditional African art and culture also visit the center from time to time for research on Yoruba "Adire" fabric processing and dyeing methods. Osogbo Art is indeed unique and has caught the craving of the world for its novel creative artifacts and as such made itself a global artistic focus. At this juncture it would be necessary to examine the extent to which art is reflective on the architecture of Osogbo.

2.7 The Socio-Economic context of Ornamentation in Osogbo (Yoruba) Architecture and Material Culture.

Styles of ornamentation can be studied in reference to the specific culture which developed unique form of decoration, or as modification through cross-cultural interactions. Ornamentation in Osogbo (Yoruba) buildings and/or stylized building forms is a

phenomenon by which individual's social and economic values are expressed. Yet one cannot fully appreciate and comprehend the complexity of this artistic form unless it is placed in its historical, cultural, social, and economic context, in addition to studying it as *material culture* and the people involved. The creative work of ornamentation can be regarded as material culture. All tangible works of art are part of material culture, but not all materials of culture are art (Prown, 1982). There is some other category of material culture (classified as miscellaneous by Prown) that is separate from art, such as the accoutrement of theatrical performance, prepared meals, books, games, etc. This genre of material culture is in the process of definition which is not at the moment the focus of this study. Prown throws some light on material culture as the study through artifacts of the beliefs-values, ideas, attitudes, assumptions of a particular community or society at a given period. He logically states that, in as much as material culture is a quest for mind and belief, works of art are more direct sources of cultural evidence. By implication, ornamentation on Yoruba buildings being works of art and the buildings in context can be regarded as material culture as well as cultural evidence of the producing community. Objects made or modified by man reflect the beliefs of individuals who made, commissioned, purchased, or used them and by extension the beliefs of the larger society to which they belonged. The objects produced are the materials for study and its purpose is the understanding of the particular culture. Among such objects produced is ornamentation in residential buildings among the Yoruba with particular reference to Osogbo architecture.

Before the advent of Brazilian Architecture early in the 20th century, Yoruba traditional architecture was spontaneous; to fulfill the central and basic purpose of architecture in providing shelter, protection, and accommodation for the physical activities of man. According to Martinet (1966) a building communicates its ability to shelter, protect, and accommodate; but it is equally or more important that it does in fact shelters, protects, and

accommodates occupants. The traditional Yoruba house is mainly designed to protect people from the rain. The scorching heat of the sun is treated as secondary. Therefore, every effort is made by the people to make their houses rain-proof. This was the driving force behind the early traditional Yoruba architecture before its flow into the vernacular style following the impact of the colonial masters and returnee slaves. Amole (2000) corroborates the fact that the vernacular is post traditional.

2.8 Ornamentation in Building as Status and Group Symbol

Ecological conditions, life style, socio-political considerations determined the nature of traditional as well as modern architectural designs and ornamentation (Egonwa, 2005). The Yoruba traditional houses were void of ornamentation as well as made of mud walls and thatched roofs. Houses were built to meet the primary purpose of shelter. The issue of ornamentation then was non-existent. Socially, Yoruba houses have architectural peculiarities which vary in importance, depending on the rank or status of the occupants. The house of the ordinary man conforms to simplicity. That of a chief, who is the head of a quarter of the town, possesses additional ornamental features such as carved door posts, instead of ordinary wooden posts, more than one courtyard and in a few cases, a background forest as observed by Afolabi-Ojo (1968). Venturi (1966) also acknowledges his preference for "complex and contradictory "architecture because it promotes" richness of meaning over its clarity." From Venturi's statement, one can imply that the more complex the architecture of a building is, the richer meaning is embedded; which unfolds in appreciation.

The materials with which palaces were made were of a higher quality than those of the chiefs. Shea butter and palm oil were used to create better looking and longer lasting walls rather than using water to create the mud bricks.

Decoration on palace walls was mainly in form of mural paintings. These murals symbolized majesty and were indicated by zoomorphic images, such as elephants, ostriches and lions. Wisdom is signified by monkeys and snakes (Afolabi-Ojo, 1968). Other decorations abound in palaces such as mud/wood or cement sculptures; in the round, that is, stand alone sculptural forms. Floors are also paved with potsherds. Yoruba traditional palaces have main reception courts and verandas ornamented with carved veranda posts as well as caryatids and sometimes in form of equestrian figures-*horse rider* (Dmochowski, 1990) as reflected in Plate 2.17. A caryatid is a sculpted female figure serving as an architectural support taking the place of a column supporting an entablature on her head according to Hersey (1998). Quite a number of Yoruba palaces have carved female figures – *caryatids*.



Plate 2.17. Efon Alaye. Veranda post in form of an equestrian figure. **Source:** Dmochowski, Z.R. (1990)

This may plausibly be as a result of several women around the King. By tradition, Yoruba Kings have several wives, both acquired and inherited. The youngest one is most often his favorite and ceremonial wife also called *olori* (Kings wife) with the other wives. Other caryatids were carved in form of mother and child, warriors on horses (Plate 2.18). The images depict essentially common daily occurrence in Yoruba cultural setting. They serve the dual purpose of functional building support in addition to aesthetics.

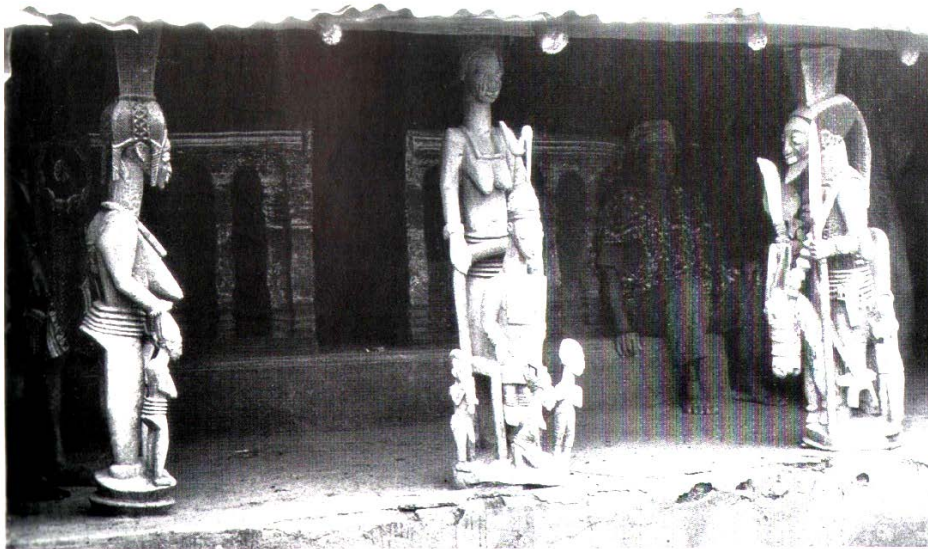


Plate 2.18: Ikere Afin. Caryatids at the end of the court hall. Owa uje
Source: Dmochowski, Z.R. (1990)

Caryatids are also found in old European Architecture. Some of the earliest known examples were found in the Caryatid Porch of the Erechtheion, Athens, 421–407 BC. (plate 2.19a and b.). They constitute standing female images in flowing draperies.

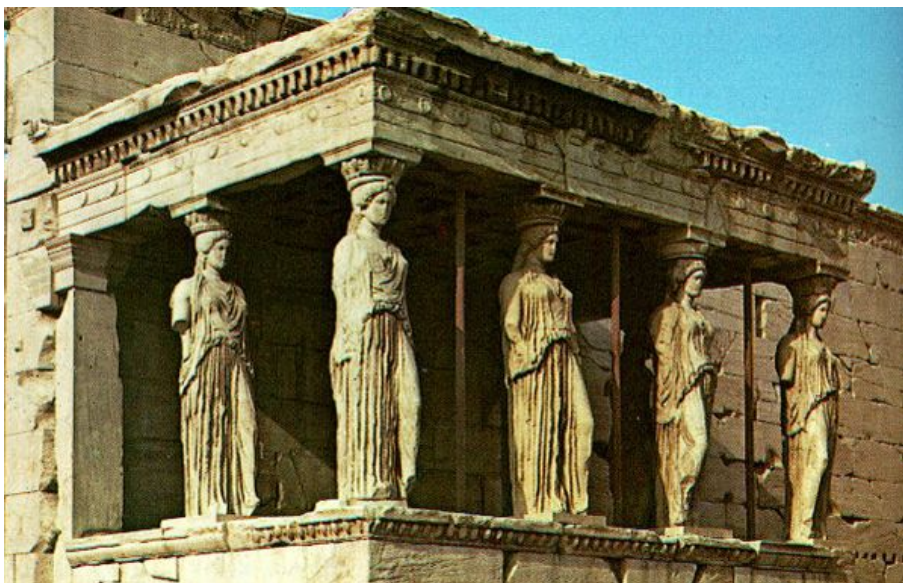


Plate 2.19a: Caryatid Porch of the Erechtheion, Athens, 421–407 BC.
Source: <http://search.yahoo.com/search?p=Caryatid+Porch+of+the+Erechtheion,+Athens,+421%E2%80%90407+BC.+&fr=slv502-&fr2=sfp&iscry=>



Plate 2.19b. *Contemporary Caryatids* at Palais Pallavicini (Josefsplatz, Vienna)
Source: Werner (2006)

In Early Modern times (1930s), the practice of integrating caryatids into building facades was revived (Plate 2.19b), and in interiors they began to be employed in fireplaces, which had not been a feature of buildings in Antiquity and offered no precedents.



Plate 2.20: Ado-Ekiti Palace Facade, showing ornamentation with sculptural Images and Decorated Balustrades in Cement.
Source: Afolabi-Ojo (1968)

In Yoruba land, the concept of the application of caryatids on pillars and carved veranda posts may not have been an external or cross cultural influence. Since most times, inspiration came from within and was synthesized into reality. Caryatids and carved veranda posts are mainly noticeable in Obas (*Kings*) palace (*Afin*) and may so be classified as palace Art. The Ado-Ekiti palace above (Plate 2.20) is evidently a post traditional Yoruba design, coupled with the Colonial Administrator's influence. One could identify the intricate ornamentation on the veranda and balustrades in concrete. Other features of ornamentation on the palace building are reflected on the windows as well as door frames moulded in cement. Above the windows are the hoods; an overhanging slab for protection from sun rays. The hood is positioned at an angle such that the full complement of the sun's reflection into the house is inhibited. No commoner dares adopt any of the royal symbols; elephants, ostriches, in addition to lions, monkeys and snakes, otherwise such individual will be indicted as undermining the *Oba* (king) or *Baale* (Chief) as explained by Afolabi-Ojo (1968).

By the post-traditional period, beyond the 1930s, few economically buoyant individuals began to adopt the application of the veranda to building. This genre of people were regarded as exceptionally wealthy in the society such that the Yoruba social music makers (musicians/entertainers) eulogised a particular fellow named Aremu at a ceremonial function with a song as atated; Aremu *oni'le ola, alagbala okun, o ko'le ola o yo veranda si o'*; meaning Aremu the owner of a magnificent building on an extensively wide plot of land wide as the sea, He built a glorious edifice and carved out an extra space for the veranda for pleasure (Plate 2.20).

The inspiration behind the mentality of a wasted space as it were, for a veranda probably stemmed from the notion that a building is purposed for shelter alone and not for aesthetics or relaxation.



Plate 2.21: A storey building with veranda in addition to a considerable amount of cement design to capture the front yard.

Source: Afolabi-Ojo (1968)

The phenomenon of a veranda then was an aberration. It was regarded as *ara* (stylish) and unnecessary. It corroborates Johnson's (1964) quote in the New York Times and I quote; *architecture is an art of wasting space beautifully*. He was however talking in the aesthetic and the functionality sense.

The emergence of the Brazilian style (modified) inspired several building designs with veranda, which application is no longer restricted to the monarchs, royal families, the rich and affluent in society. In Contemporary times, the application of ornamentation in buildings in Yoruba land (southwest Nigeria) is a unilaterally acceptable phenomenon. Old structures are being upgraded complimentary to modern designs, particularly with extant hybrid of modern building materials. This presumably may be for the reason that the application and procurement of ornamentation in buildings is relatively insignificant to the cost of putting up a building and plausibly that the client or owner feels proud of his contemporaneous property. Not all houses have ornamentation though; having a house with ornamentation requires an eye for taste, (*Oju ona*) in addition to extra budgetary power for aesthetics.

The phenomenon of traditional Yoruba houses belongs more to the period before the 1930's according to Afolabi-Ojo (1968). Not much of the traditional architecture remains, as quite

some transformation have occurred beyond this period, because of increasing affluence as well as development of the people.

2.9 Ornamentation and Socio-Economic Development in Osogbo

The impact of the Art school on Osogbo has inevitably engendered tremendous socio-economic and cultural development to the people and Osogbo through the exportation of their artworks to other parts of the world. More young ones took to the art profession, as well as cultural and tourism promotion. The euphoria of artistic creativity is still palpable in the city of Osogbo. This presumably has rubbed off on other artisans in diverse vocational endeavours; such as contributes to the ornamental artifacts on architecture. This group of professionals encompasses the carpentry, masonry, electric welding on metal gates as well as burglary proof grilles on windows, sculptors/woodcarvers executing engraved images on wooden doors, plumbing etc.

2.10 Meaning in Yoruba Architectural Ornamentation

The commonsense notion used most often by architects and philosophers alike has been that meaning is a "mental" event, that it deals primarily with "images," "ideas," "concepts," "thoughts," "feelings." (Hershberger, 1970). In architectural ornamentation, perhaps the most distinguishing aspect of the subject is its function as symbol. Ornamentation contains the myths and beliefs that define culture; it is both a construction of meaning and an enabler of the construction of meaning. In other words, ornamentation has an intrinsic purpose for which it was created (*meaning*); the communal understanding and acceptability of such artifact, form, or object gives it a name, root and status in addition to identity as material culture of the initiating community.

Every aspect of architecture inevitably contains within itself meaning or intention, for the act of design itself is an act of intention. Even given a set of requirements and programme the designer has no choice but to insert external forces to give form to these requirements, for the requirements alone are not enough. Therefore the more additional content imputed into a design, the more meaning is contained within it.

2.11 Colonial Influence (Brazilian architecture) on Osogbo (Yoruba architecture): How and why it has come to stay in Nigeria

2.11.1 The Origin and Features of Brazilian Architecture

The Brazilian colonial architecture was derived from Portugal, with adaptations influenced by the tropical climate and culture (Jackson, 2003). In other words, the Brazilian style of Architecture was functional to take care of the coastal climatic condition. Some of the main features of Brazilian domestic architecture include the extended eaves to protect the stucco walls from the rains and sun rays, verandas and porches to take account of the climate, outhouses and slave quarters to reflect the way of life, in both urban and rural settings.

During the late 18th and 19th centuries, the colonial rule brought with it “civilization” and the development of public buildings such as institutions, banks, hospitals, courthouses, factories and residences. In Nigeria, the Brazilian Style had extensive reflection on the vernacular architecture. Nigeria's Brazilian architecture is a legacy of the thousands of freed slaves who returned to West Africa in the 19th century. They came with some skills to show including trained carpenters, cabinet makers, masons and bricklayers in Brazil and borrowing from the baroque styles popular in Brazil through the 18th century, these freed men stamped their exuberant and individualistic style on doorways, brightly painted facades and chunky

concrete columns (Brooke, 1989). It was a very popular style of nineteenth century in Lagos popularly adopted in the multi-storey buildings.

Many of the returnees to Nigeria were Yoruba natives or descendants, a fact recognized by British administrators who called them "repatriated Yorubas" even though they traveled on Brazilian passports (Vlach, 1984). In the 1880s, three thousand, three hundred and twenty-one (3,321) Brazilian ex-slaves constituted approximately nine percent of the whole population of Lagos (Vlach, 1984, Cole, 1975). Although they were in the minority, the Afro-Brazilians made a tremendous contribution to the city's architecture. Since many of the returning Yoruba had worked in the building trades in Brazil, they found their skills as carpenters and masons much appreciated in Lagos (Vlach, 1984, Goodwin, 1966, Laotan, 1943 and Turner, 1942). The Afro-Brazilians put their skills into practice as a start up point to enhance their economic development. This was the beginning of Brazilian architectural influence and styles.

The clearest indication of Afro-Brazilian influence is reflected by the many two-story houses, which were referred to as *ile petesi* or "upstairs house" in the 1970s in addition to other bungalows trimmed with molded stucco facades. These dwellings first appeared in Lagos in the 1850s and became increasingly more common place in the last quarter of the 19th century. Storey building being introduced, typical of Afro Brazilian architecture and churches with strong gothic themes was corroborated by Akinsemoyin and Richards (1977). These were built with sand-crete blocks and embellished with heavy ornamental pillars and molded balustrades. Elaborate decoration that graces the facades of these buildings is the most distinctive Brazilian feature as reflected in Plate 2.21. It shows a typical Brazilian house type in Lagos, built in 1875. Structures like the Brazilian houses, which are more than one room deep or more than one story tall, was a striking deviation from traditional Yoruba building practice as observed by Vlach (1984). Alongside multiple storeys characterizing the Afro-

Brazilian architectural style, other prominent features of this style include an attic, a double-loaded exaggerated corridor (*passagio*), porches/loggias and copious sculpted ornamentation (Marafatto, 1983). The architectural embellishment according to Osasona (2007), was in stucco-work, expressed as mouldings around window-openings and portals, quoins, plinths, column capitals, shafts and bases, and relief murals, as well as woodwork (generating carved balusters and door panels).



Plate 2.22. A Nigerian Brand of Brazilian House in Lagos built in 1875.
A 1974 Pix by John Vlach. **Source:** Vlach 1984

Most floor plans of Brazilian houses in Nigeria feature a hallway, usually in the middle, which is flanked by rooms on both sides. The hallway is the basic organizing feature of this set of building types. The arrangement is commonly manipulated such that the rooms to one side of the hall may be made larger than those on the other according to Crooke (1966) and Marris (1962), or of equal size ranging from four to ten rooms facing each other. Another design may convert one of the front rooms to a veranda or incorporated into the hallway as a living room, or the hallway equally divided into two, creating a twin self contained units.

Over the course of the late 19th and early 20th centuries the indigenous Yoruba gradually familiarized themselves with Brazilian building concepts. They had mastered and adopted them whole-heartedly.

Another group of repatriated Africans came into Lagos during the 19th century who could have served as architectural intermediaries other than the Afro-Brazilians. These were the Creoles/Saros from Sierra Leone. They were mostly Catholics (*aguda* being colloquial Yoruba for Catholic). They returned to Lagos as early as 1839. This group of people stood as an interface between the elite European administration and the indigenous subject peoples according to Kopytoff (1965). The Saros were former slaves who had been repatriated to Freetown in Sierra Leone, and whose emigration to Lagos had been facilitated by the British. They were renowned merchants, specializing in two-storey structures with living quarters on the first floor, and retail/ wholesale outlets and administrative spaces on the ground floor (Osasona 2007). The Sierra Leonean Creoles, as Mabogunje (1961) pointed out, were trained mainly to read and write, during the time of their captivity, while the Afro-Brazilians were trained to build.

Among the leaders of the Creole were missionaries who arrived from Freetown equipped not only with a new Christian religion but with new house types, including two prefabricated houses made of planks which the Yoruba called *ile alapako* according to Mabogunje (1961). The interpretation of the wood fabricated houses ‘alapako’ as indicated by Mabogunje is incorrect. Its correctly written Yoruba form should be *ile onipako* rather than *ile alapako*. The latter connotes a different meaning altogether. *Alapako* refers to a saw miller and not a wooden house. The architectural style of the Saros reflected British colonial architecture and never became very fashionable outside the Saro community as explained by Aradeon (1984). The restricted patronage of the Saro may partly have been due to the Nigerian prejudice on the use of wood because of its vulnerability to termites and possible fire outbreak on one

hand and probably an aversion to a style associated with the colonialists on the other hand. Besides, the colonial style outlook was austere in comparison to the more colourful and elaborately decorative Brazilian style. Significant aesthetic preference was therefore made for the Brazilian than the British Colonial styles.

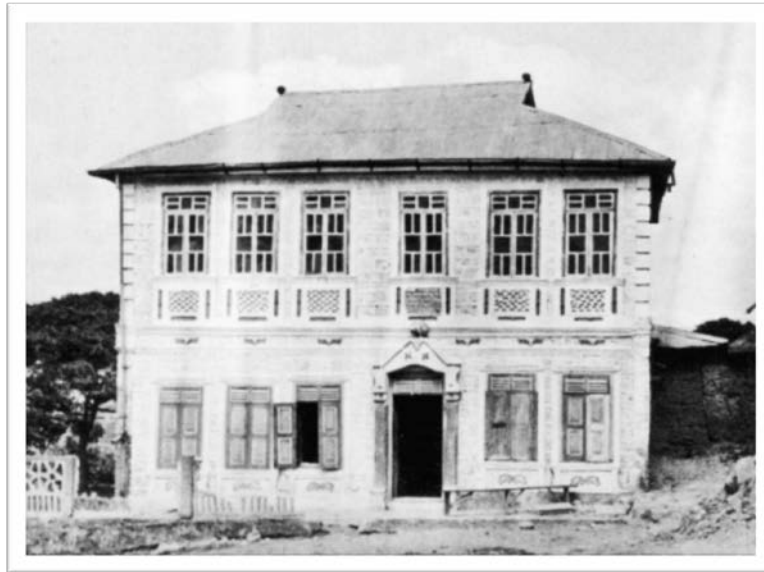


Plate 2.22: Portuguese Style Building in Oshogbo, 1950
Source: Cordwell 1983

The Lagos Yoruba indigenes were not favourably disposed towards the creoles as they were regarded as stingy, self-righteous agents of the colonial regime, and the consorts of their oppressors (Vlach, 1984). The Natives gave great evidence of their deep hatred towards the Sierra Leonians, according to Verger (1976). He further noted that the Afro-Brazilians "seemed like poor relatives" in contrast to the Saro, who "returned to Lagos after having become rich. The antagonism was so much that they were not ready to adopt the Creoles' Architecture style (Plate 2.22) except perhaps when the Creoles returned to their original up-country home towns such as Abeokuta or Ibadan (Vlach 1984). They penetrated the

hinterland to such other Yoruba towns as Ijebu-Ode, Ile-Ife, Osogbo and Ilesha, to mention a few (Osasona, 2007).

Conversely, the Yoruba had sentimental preference for the Afro-Brazilians along with the legacy of their architectural style. They were considered as those who have been away from home. This plausibly may be key to the adoption of the Brazilian Architecture style that has come to stay till date in Nigeria. This Brazilian style was imitated by the trainee apprentices. The masters' skills were only partially passed to the next generation. The style spread through extensive imitation and modification. The phenomenon of design transformation actually abrogated the style being exclusively Brazilian.



Plate: 2.24a and b Modified features of Brazilian style on window expressed in strings of moulds in Contemporary Architecture on Lagos Island.
Source: Adesemoyin and Richards (2011)



Plate 2.23b

Source: Adesemoyin and Richards 2011

Several of the Brazilian ornamentation styled buildings subsist in Lagos and can still be seen in few ancient cities in Nigeria. From observation, despite modifications and transformation on the morphology of the style, the cream of classical contemporary buildings being put up in Lekki, Lagos Island, reflect features of the Brazilian house style with modifications in modern materials as shown in Plates 2.23a & 2.23b. These features include ornamented window frames and hoods, mouldings round the windows (plate 2.24b), and dormer windows on the roof and eaves.

2.12 Summary

The Yorubas from prehistoric times had engaged in artistic creative activities in the areas of fabric dying, weaving, pottery making, and carvings to mention a few. The establishment of Ulli Beier art school further instigated artistic creativity in young creative talents in Osogbo; although the pioneer students of his school were not that young. The returnee slaves from

Brazil as well had a major influence on Yoruba domestic architecture ornamentation. It is this creative instinct in them that gave birth to decorative motif implementation on building elements as reflected in the last two Plates of 2.23a and b.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section presents the methodological procedures that were used in gathering and analyzing data on ornamentation in residential buildings. The study adopted a combination of the Art Historical and Qualitative approaches. Conceptually, the residences are treated as material culture artifacts. Therefore, the search for meaning and descriptive analyses of ornamentation of the buildings necessarily derived from the cultural context of Osogbo and the wider Yoruba. In addition, the oral historical method was deployed to aid in the collection of historical data on the residential buildings, the patrons and the producers (artisans) of ornamentation in the study area.

3.2 Collection of Data

The primary source of data collection for this research work were the domestic buildings and the decorations on them. The research method was a combination of historical and qualitative research approaches. These approaches generated descriptive and analytical data. The approaches had the additional advantage of providing data that came directly from the source being investigated. The historical approach implied interviewing building owners as well as other informants. Re-living history will warrant interacting with eye witnesses or their surrogates through the oral historical method. It is important to note that the idea of interviewing surrogates became necessary because a number of direct witnesses were not available for a reason or other. In the Yoruba culture however, there is always an eldest son or relation in a family known as *olori ebi* in the absence of the father in the house called *Baale* or *Baba onile*. Furthermore, in order to filter truth from exaggeration, biases and

embellishment, which are the inherent weaknesses of oral accounts (Oyeniyi, 2012) corroborative evidences were sought from descriptions at secondary sources in journal articles, books and other repositories.

3.2.1 Selection of the Domestic Buildings

It has been established historically that the city of Osogbo grew from the traditional core area (Agbola 1997). Therefore, the buildings were selected according to their locations in the different areas which developed at different periods in the history of Osogbo. An examination of the city revealed that the domestic building types differ according to these historical periods (Okpako and Amole 2012). The selected buildings thus captured the historical periods implicitly in the different zones related to the historical development of the city. This selection process added the historical dimension to the selected buildings in Osogbo. The selected buildings for study were the identified domestic buildings with ornamentation. The selection was based on chronology and time. The selected buildings for investigation were chosen by snowball method. Reconnaissance was carried out on each building by one leading to another and stopping only when similar ones were encountered. In addition, the historical data from each building were collected through the oral historical method by interaction with landlords or surrogates. In the qualitative research strategy, the following methods were chosen for the study.

3.2.2 Observation

The strategy of physical observation was adopted for the identification of ornamentation in domestic buildings and its location on them. Graphic illustration and descriptive analysis of the artifacts were carried out. The location is particularly important in relation to the visibility

of the decorations and the elements of the buildings including doors, windows, floors and fascia boards.

3.2.3 Interview

Oral history or tradition is the African transitory process of generating information from one generation to the other. It was therefore adopted in procuring historical data from Landlords and surrogates as the primary entry source, hence its adoption. It is a very reliable approach as it gives firsthand information according to Munsterberg (2009). It is a potent approach for this study, since it allows the culture to speak for itself. The concept of oral historical method connotes a scheduled interview with key persons. These key persons are the landlords or house owners and the artisans responsible for the production of decorations on the buildings. The tool of interview guide was adopted as flagged in Appendix I. The semi-guided interview schedule enabled more interrogation as the recipients responded.

The interview with the different *Baales* or their relations (surrogates) revealed the age of such buildings. This in turn disclosed the type of ornamentation at a given time as well as its changes in buildings over time. Such other data received from house owners are the values, and attitudes placed on the ornamentation in buildings. Again, one derived what it symbolizes and their feelings if the houses were without ornamentation. Data collection from the artisans revealed the content and medium of the ornaments and the value placed on these ornamentation motifs beyond economic and class/status considerations.

The study interviewed 32 house owners and 28 surrogates, in addition to 44 artisans with the breakdown as illustrated; twelve (12) masons, ten (10) welders, nine (9) ‘Plaster of Paris’ designers, seven (7) carpenters and seven (7) aluminum/steel window designers. The number of the interviewed artisans stopped at those specified because nothing new was harvested from further interviews.

3.3. Field Study

Data were collected on the field between December, 2013 and April, 2014

3.3.1. Initial Visits

The initial visit to the study area was carried out in December, 2013, in the company of my supervisor from Ile-Ife. We went in through the Gbongan – Osogbo road; drove through the city to corroborate the facts in literature with regard to the core of the city emanating from the Kings palace and a focal point at the King’s historic market (*Oja Oba*). In addition, the *Oja Oba* is the location where the oldest buildings exist and the development of subsequent ones grew concentrically round the palace.

3.3.2. Actual Field Work

The actual fieldwork was carried out by the researcher and six research assistants between January and April 2014. The research assistants were students from the Federal Polytechnic, Ede. Ornamentation in domestic buildings was a familiar terrain to them so they looked out for technical details for documentation.

Fascinating ornamentation on buildings were recorded through photographic medium in addition to freehand sketches. The data collected were decorations on windows and window hoods, doors and their surroundings, various kinds of decorations on columns and arches, wall decorations and balustrades designs, different types of fascia boards, designs of aeration holes, gable ends of roof, decorations on fences and gates.

Historical data were collected in respect of chronology of different building for ease of classification. Other historical data collected from interviews were the nature of workmen that contributed to the construction of the buildings. The artisans volunteered information as related to their vocation as well as satisfaction derived from such jobs in addition to how much they embraced the work of ornamentation in buildings.

3.4 Data Analysis

Data collected from the field were analysed with four major techniques of qualitative method consonant to art historical research according to Munsterberg (2009), Adams (1989) and Ben-Amos (1989). These are Visual Description, Stylistic, Historical and Iconographic Analyses.

3.4.1 *Visual Description*

Here, a visual description of what is observed utilizing the most succinct words to convey the message is expressed (Munsterberg, 2009), transforming a visual experience into a verbal one as well as converting a private experience into one that can be communicated. The visual description began with an explanation of the subject and the materials of the work, that is, the content. The artifacts were observed slowly, carefully, and repeatedly, to identify the components that made the whole. Care was taken to delineate assumptions from actual observations, so as not to confuse what is seen with what is thought to be seen, or what is known to be there.

3.4.2 *Stylistic Analysis*

It was recognized that stylistic analysis, though applicable to the entire architecture of the buildings could not capture the ornamentation as such. It became clear that forms of ornamentation appropriate to different ‘styles of architecture’ were the only forms of categorization in relation to style. This was captured as ‘historical categories’ since the styles themselves were associated with definite periods in the history of domestic architecture in Osogbo

3.4.3 Historical Analysis

Historical analysis is the subject of sustained investigation according to Burckhardt (1853), who wrote the first major studies of art as an aspect of culture. The same method was applied to the ancient through the contemporary art of ornamentation in buildings. This study used the historical method to analyse how ornamentation (art) fits into the surrounding culture, its economic import, in addition to what is revealed about social and political issues of the period.

3.4.4 Iconographic Analysis

According to Munsterberg (2009), iconographic analysis was used to establish the meaning of a particular work at a particular time. The meaning given to an artifact may or may not include what the maker of the work intended but more importantly, what the person who paid for the work wanted and by what he or she is fascinated as well as the meaning read to the artifact. Different period or place provides different possible audiences, each of which demanded specific kinds of information and derived certain assumptions. Like all types of art historical and iconographic analyses begin with what is seen in the object/s for consideration. These meanings may be public or private.

With reference to the iconographic analytic principle which is hinged on assembling historical evidence to reconstruct these proofs, this study investigated the captivating motifs of ornamentation (iconized) on buildings in addition to their meaning. The choice of this ornamentation could plausibly have engendered adoption for consistent application, observable by people over time now considered a 'style'. The process involved considerable historical data collected from primary sources, or reference to authoritative secondary sources.

3.5 Summary

The methodology adopted for this study is a combination of historical and qualitative approaches. The historical analysis in relation to the subject of ornamentation in domestic buildings in Osogbo was considered by its form on the elements of the building taking into consideration the types of ornamentation in relation to the time and age of the buildings. The qualitative method of data collection and analysis was addressed by interaction with building owners or surrogates, close scrutiny of the forms of ornamentation in domestic buildings as well as photographic documentation in addition to close observation and documentation schedule. The selected buildings for investigation were chosen by snowball method; one building leading to another and had to stop only when similar designs are encountered.

CHAPTER FOUR

CLASSIFICATION OF ORNAMENTATION IN DOMESTIC BUILDINGS IN OSOGBO

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents study findings on the classification of ornamentation in Yoruba residential buildings in Osogbo. It is known that the human mind cannot do without making classification and a number of authors had adopted classification of buildings into clusters in their different studies (Okpako and Amole, 2012, Osasona, 2007 and Aradeon, 1984). The mind works by putting things into groups or categories. This usually may happen consciously or otherwise by a process of associating things with one or more groups of similar things (Okpako and Amole, 2012). The two authors included ornamentation as part of the criteria for classification of Domestic buildings into styles. They also classified buildings into categories with respect to their styles.

In an attempt to write the history of Nigerian Architecture: the last 100 years (1884 – 1984), Aradeon (1984) classified traditional architecture according to their chronological styles: These include *i)* the ‘widespread’ traditional architecture, *ii)* the ‘specialised’ traditional architecture and *iii)* the ‘modified’ traditional architecture influenced by colonial rule. Osasona (2007) classified Nigerian buildings in relation to the Traditional, Vernacular/Adobe and the Folk building styles. This is with the consideration of being designated Nigerian/African architecture. The idea of looking for style is a natural phenomenon and one system of classification, thus, this study adopted this approach by classifying the different ornamentations in residential buildings identified in the study area.

This study classifies ornamentation in residential buildings in Osogbo using two major categories. These are (i) by the historical consideration and (ii) by association of identified

decorations with specific elements of the building. The historical consideration of classification of ornamentation in buildings is therefore based on its style and type in relation to its epoch as 'ancient', 'modern' and 'contemporary'. This method of classification distinguishes the styles of ornamentation at a given time and age. For the purpose of the current study, the ancient category are the buildings built before 1960; the word *ancient* in this context does not necessarily mean a time in the far past but, an expression used by the Yoruba when referring to *eni atijo*, meaning an old acquaintance or *ile atijo* (house of the yester-years). The modern or post-colonial buildings are those erected between 1960 and 2000 while the contemporary classification are those built between 2000 and 2014; which connotes the end of field work investigations.

Further to be discussed are the types of ornamentation on these buildings in Osogbo in relation to their locations on building elements or parts. This is in connection with their positions on the buildings. Ornamentation were identified in 105 domestic buildings in Osogbo. This comprises of 27 'ancient', 31 'modern' and 47 'contemporary' buildings. The rationale for the classification as such is to link the characteristics of the ornamentation in the buildings to the time frame of existence. In other words, ornamentalations are associated with the building at the designated periods of *ancient*, *modern* and *contemporary* are those produced in affiliation with the buildings at such periods. Within each of these historical categories, the location or elemental aspects which the decoration is associated with is identified and analysed.

The ancient traditional Yoruba buildings comprise of the court yard design (agbo ile) in addition to the vernacular style of architecture. The mud houses are virtually extinct because of modernisation. Traces of the mud houses may still be found as farm houses in the villages. The court yard structure is an urban design with a central open space surrounded by units of

rooms (Vlach 1984). The arrangement assumes a rectangular/square shape. This design often has two entrances into the compound as illustrated in Figure 4.1. Noticeable are decorative designs on the Fascia board, the windows with strings of mouldings round them in addition to the window hood, the doors are panelled with goat gates to mention a few.

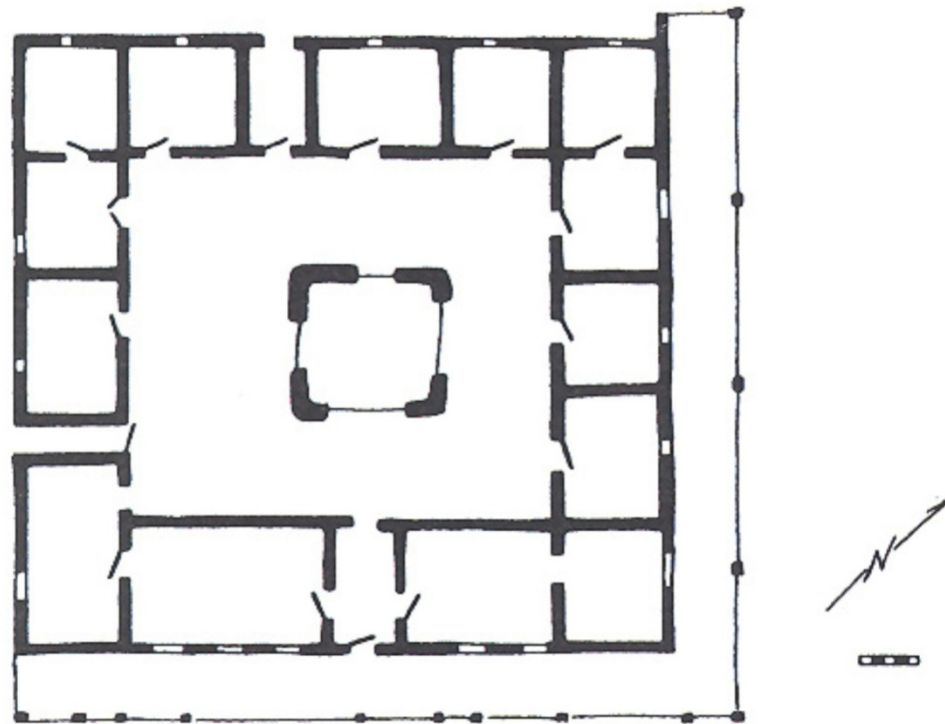


Fig. 4.1 Floor Plan of a Typical Traditional Yoruba Compound.
Source: Vlach (1984)

The vernacular style is more prevalent with a central corridor comprising of rooms facing one another. The Yoruba bungalow and its various sub-types have their origins in Brazil as previously highlighted. They are manipulative and may be symmetrical or asymmetrical in nature. These are the existing types of Yoruba traditional architecture; the vernacular subsists in modern time and is most commonly found in tenement houses.

The ancient ornamentations in buildings erected before 1960 as categorised here have more decorations on the building elements, influenced by repatriated slaves from Brazil and Sierra

Leone (Aradeon, 1984). The returnee slaves arrived with building and decorative skills. Among them were masons and carpenters with considerable experience in Brazil (Vlach, 1984). They made appreciable impact on decoration in the ancient buildings with respect to mouldings on windows and window hoods, the doors and doorways, in addition to the dormer windows to mention a few. The façade of these buildings comprise of ornamentations existing on other elevations of the buildings. These are the fascia board, mouldings around window frames and doors, veranda balustrades, arches and columns, floor level bands in storey buildings defining the floors and occasional decoration on walls as shown later in this Chapter. This goes to suggest that the Yoruba people have flair and penchant for ornamentation. One can logically conclude that this is why ornamentations are reflective on the houses they built before the advent of modern architecture.

The ancient buildings appear to have more decoration than the modern ones (Oliver, 1968). The advent of post-colonial building style coincided with the time the international style had a remarkable impact in Nigerian architecture resulting from the influx of European architects (Le Roux, 2004). Shortly before independence, modern architecture within Nigeria was inevitable due to the presence of the colonial administrators. At this time, nearly all public buildings of importance were built by European architects, and in a style and technique foreign to the country. This was Beier's contention and critique in a short chapter in *Art in Nigeria*; published on the eve of independence as a catalogue for the Independence Exhibition (Beier, 1960). Apart from the technical difficulties of adapting 'Brazilian' architecture for banks or universities, Beier observed that Nigerians see modern architecture as a symbol of progress and participation in a modern world. Beier noted that this 'readiness on the part of the Nigerians to accept anything big and modern and technically impressive' gave the foreign architect in Nigeria a moral responsibility to grant their delight. However,

Beier disputes Fry's (1964) claim that there was nothing to be learned from traditional African architecture.

The decorations on the modern buildings are austere and virtually plain. This appears to be the style and character of modern buildings between 1960 and year 2000 as are later illustrated.

The term modern is post-colonial. It is evident that the modern buildings have scanty or less ornamentation than the ancient: The issue of scanty decoration on modern buildings is a fall out of modernism and modernist architects that ornamentation on buildings be abolished (Fry and Drew, 1964; Loos, 1998). The phenomenon came later to Africa particularly Nigeria. It has an extensive rippling effect on all new buildings up to the University level in the sixties to year 2000. This brings us to have a look at what ornamentation on the modern buildings look like. In all, 31 modern buildings were examined for ornamentation. The location of ornamentation may remain the same on the buildings but some of the material contents have changed. The building style; vernacular and Brazilian also remain, as well as its ease to manipulate. Some modern buildings still bear ornamentation that has features of the ancient, resulting into a spillover effect. This brings us to examine the nature and content of the contemporary ornamentation in affiliation with elemental trends of the building.

A building without ornament is like heaven without the stars.
- Santayana (1990)

The contemporary ornamentation period seems to have ushered in a wide range of decorations on buildings. It is as though the people had been caged from manifesting their creativity and opulence. It takes economic power to execute the level of architectural decorations that are implemented at the GRA and the estates in Osogbo under the contemporary taxonomy of ornamentation. Some of the building designs are uniquely

amorphous; exclusively different from the extant four elevation phenomenon of building constructs. The sides manifest differences where they have a regular four sided elevations; that is, what appears on one side structurally differs from the other as shown in Plates 4.1 and 4.2.



Plate 4.1 shows adornment with windows on one side of this building



Plate 4.2 Exhibits fewer windows on the other side of the same building in Plate 4.1 with flat and sloppy roof

Very few of these contemporary buildings have flat and inclined roofs; in which case the front elevation is a bit higher than the rear for free flow of rain-water, contributory to its uniqueness and form. More of these buildings are mostly a storey high while very few are two-storey and privately owned. The public housing under the contemporary genre is found in the other estates exclusive of the GRA. There may not be much differences in the location or position of the decorations, but there is a great improved outbreak and continuity of context and purpose of architectural ornamentation. Ornamentation on buildings seems to be back and alive in full swing and nothing seems to ground it to a halt. One sees new things and new ideas every day. It is awesome and amazing. The nomenclature of ornaments may not have changed; there exist novel ornaments and building materials crafted by machine technology to embellish and upgrade buildings (Akinsemoyin and Vaughan-Richard, 1977). However, one comes across a number of repeated ornaments in the likeness of columns and arches, balusters and window mouldings, which have significant aesthetic qualities.

It is also noteworthy that many of these decorations are traceable to Classical Architecture (Gambari, 1985); the variants of wall rustications, arches, columns and balusters. Out of the ornamentations on 43 contemporary buildings examined, the study took a few buildings and discussed commonalities of all the decorations through their designated periods. The ornamentation was obtained by formal process, while other buildings were also examined; the decorations on these ones appeared to have captured the major ones across the city.

4.2 Location of Ornamentation in Buildings

The choice of buildings for discussion starts from the core area around the king's palace (Oja Oba). The first building owned by Mr Folorunso was built in 1950 on No 10 *Iso-Isu, Oja-Oba* in Osogbo and is a storey building. The building style is Adobe/Vernacular architecture. The design on one side is replicated on the other, connoting symmetry as well as

accommodating a corridor at the centre. The façade of a building mostly bears all the forms of ornamentation that are contained on the other sides of a building. In other words, it has more of all the decorations that may or may not appear on all other sides of the building. The following identified decorations are highlighted and discussed with respect to their ages/periods, locations as well as in association with the elements of the buildings.

4.2.1 The Gable End of Roof and Pediment

On the façade are two pediments arising from the shape and design of the gable end of roof. The pediment is the allowance of the wall within a triangularly shaped structure of the roof. Buildings are usually centred by their gable ends, making the pediment an important feature of architectural feature. This however, is not the case in the illustrated example in Plate 4.1. Plate 4.3 has double gable ends of roof thereby emphasizing the pediments. The ‘gable end of roof and pediment’ is not a common occurrence. It shows the owner has taste and wealthy to have adopted its use on his building.

The gable end phenomenon is not a common concept in the building ornamentation, but one was found on a contemporary building in Ofatedo, Zone 8 as reflected in Plate 4.6



Plate. 4.3. Roof with double gable ends emphasizing the pediments embedding aeration holes

4.2.2 Ornamentation around Aeration Holes

These two pediments have one aeration hole each, giving cool air to the ceiling and roof during the hot season. The holes are decorated around with moulds, supported by two

brackets. Each bracket is stocked by round pebbles of stones as reflected in Plate 4.3. These are made of concrete.

The types of aeration holes vary from house to house of all categories of ornamentation decorations. Plate 4.4 shows a two storey building with two holes in front and three each at the sides on the ceiling asbestos. Each hole has net, guarding against access to reptiles and rodents. These aeration holes round the building asbestos ceiling are functional but less decorated than the ancient aeration holes. This type of aeration design gives ample air to the ceiling for coolness. Other kinds of aeration holes are located at the fore front of the façade below the roof. Some are decorated while some are executed using perforated blocks. It is noted that aeration holes literarily disappeared in contemporary buildings.



Plate 4.4. Shows aeration holes distributed on the asbestos ceiling without any embellishment

4.2.3 Long Strings Mould

Next to the aeration holes is a string of mould that goes round the building (Plate 4.3). This mould string marks the roof level of the building. The first three characteristics mentioned are not that glaring but add technical precision and aesthetic to the building.

4.2.4 Columns and Arches

Columns and Arches are not common features of the ancient order of decorations. Where they subsist, the two always co-exist. There is usually not one without the other. They are located on both or all floors of the building. The ancient building on No. 10 Iso-Isu at oja'ba is an outstanding one and has more ornamentation than any of its contemporaries. So it is a reference point in discussing the subject of ornamentation. The upper floor has 2 arches and 3 columns, 2 of the 3 columns are pilasters - projecting out of the walls. The arches are designed by one step serration at each end. On the lower floor are 4 columns and 3 arches, 2 of which are pilasters. The arches and columns add a palatial and kingly appearance to the building in Plate 4.5



Plate. 4.5. Top Floor Columns and Arches of an Ancient Classification of Ornamentation.



Plate. 4.6. Ground Floor Columns and Arches of a Modern
Classification of Ornamentation

Plate 4.6 is a paradigm of columns and arches in the austere decorated post-colonial classification of building ornamentation.

Plate. 4.7 is another variation of columns and arches in the contemporary order of decoration. It has a well rounded arch which two legs enter the welcoming capitals of the columns. The arch edges are decorated with mould and the columns are fluted. The building in described is a bungalow and as such, the columns are shorter. The arches and columns content are rendered in concrete. The building is on Zone 8, Ofatedo, Osogbo.



Plate.4.7. Rounded Arches and fluted Columns on a contemporary building.

4.2.5 *Veranda Balusters*

The façade of the ancient category of ornamentation shown in Plate 4.5 is a small veranda representation in between the columns and arches. This is unlike the regular veranda blusters that span through the length of the building at the back. The baluster comprises two units of repeated design motif - a circular design flanked on the left and right by two slim bars, wedged together on a base strip on which the circle sits. The medium of this unit of motif is finished in concrete.

Plate.4.8 is another variant of balcony design rendered in steel. It is modern. Early in the sixties when modern architecture arrived in Nigeria, modern houses were without much ornamentation as it was in the Western world. Buildings had scanty decorations after the order of modernism.



Plate.4.8. Modern type of Balcony made of Steel.

In the post-colonial design, the medium of wrought iron replaced the concrete balusters of the ancient time and style. The design is just straight with overhead railings or mildly patterned. A low level wall is sometimes used as the ground floor baluster as in Plate 4.11. Plate 4.9 illustrates a contemporary balcony with the medium of glass and stainless steel. This is post-modernist order of decoration when ornamentation is more embraced and utilised. It adds beauty and elegance to the building.



Plate 4.9. A Contemporary Balcony on the Upper Floor made of Glass and Stainless Steel

4.2.6 *The floor Level Definer (FLD)*

At the middle of the building height is a band of floor definers, exhibiting the interface between the ground and the upper floors. The band has an engraved design pattern on it. On the upper part is curved rectangular mould with a rosette at the centre. This is repeated round the building. Next to this is a mould strip, another plain band and finally another moulded strip marking the lower edging of the band as illustrated in Plate 4.10



Plate. 4.10. A Band of Floor level Definer of an Ancient Classified Ornamentation on Building in Osogbo.

Plate 4.11 is a building with the modern type of floor definer. It is about 4cm thick strip protruding out of the wall round the building. Wall bands appear so tiny and insignificant to the size of the building, but, its position on the building gives technical firmness to its overall outlook.



Plate.4.11. A floor level Definer on a Modern Building protrudes as a stripe round the building exactly half way the building height.

The post-modern contemporary ornamentation taxonomy does not seem to have the crave to define floor levels. The building design may have two floors on one side and three on the other. In a whole building, the floor level definer may appear on half of a side by cantilever or a thin strip of line on the building. This may or may not necessarily go round the building as projected in Mr. Akinwusi's building (Plate 4.12) Mr. Akinwusi is a politician and gubernitarian aspirant in Osun State. The example of his building exhibits a thin, suggestive line depicting the floor level. This goes round the building at the instance of this illustration. On the side of the building is another half way length, a cantilever also marking the floor level. The wall corner rustication coming down from the ceiling also terminates on the thin floor level line definer. All these intricacies give it a technical precision with added aesthetics.



Plate.4.12. A thin, almost invisible floor level definer on a Contemporary ornamentation classification genre It also shows half building length cantilever

4.2.7 *Windows and window hoods*

Windows found in Osogbo ranging from ancient to modern come in diverse shapes and sizes. The windows in the ancient order of ornamentation are narrower because of the limitations and exposure of the builders of folk architecture. Folk architecture is a term used for buildings without the input of an architect. The windows shapes and designs changed as professionals got involved in the building industry and the experience of the builders also changed. The mason was able to interpret architectural drawings and could decipher his master's intent.

The windows of ancient decoration classification have hoods and moulded frames round each window. The hoods, located at the top of the window are supported by two decorated holders at the edges. The lower string of mould under the window gives a balance to the whole window design. The upper floor windows are glass with wood frames, while the lower floor windows are mainly wood works in half engraved panels, slanted and louver-like for aeration even when the windows are shut (Plate 4.13).

The reason for the difference in materials of the windows is in the general sense that having a glass window at the lower floor is vulnerable to destruction/damages when children throw stones. Almost all the windows in this league have this order of glass associated windows on the top floor and the wood panel windows on the ground floor. Besides, the tenants or inhabitants of the lower floor have the privilege of the louvre-like slit on the panel windows for unlimited aeration at anytime the windows are shut. In addition to this is the fan-light concept above the window shutters. This also brings in natural light though may be deem in the absence electricity or lamp.



Plate. 4.13. Ancient Ornamentation window design with the upper floor window in glass and wooden window panes and the lower floor window in wood only.

Traces of the same design occur in the modern decorative style as an overlap of the previous style in the modern. However, a remarkable difference exists in the modern window and window hood decorative style. The windows in the modern are wider for more aeration and placed in appropriate position for cross ventilation.

A most prominent feature of the modern classified ornamentation is the window hood called “Afamaco”. It is a projection out of the wall round the window frame as in Plate 4.14 on Alhaji Oluwaseun’s house, No 5b Lawole Street, Agbole Aro.

The Afamaco enhances the prominence of the windows as well as caters for the climatic issues by creating some level of shade for the inhabitants. The Louvre blades are for the upper floor while the ground floor windows are paneled as reflected in Plate 4.15 The reason for this is as stated in the ancient.



Plate.4.14. Top Left: Modern windows are wider with window hoods (Afamaco)

Plate.4.15. Top Left: Modern windows on ground floors are paneled with window hoods

The contemporary classification of window designs is diverse and appealing. They combined aesthetics with different shapes and sizes. They hardly have hoods, except one example located on one of the chalets of an about completed building in the GRA. The buildings in the compound are actually completed and at the finishing stage.



Plate.4.16. An arched contemporary window design

Plate. 4.16 is a unique window design after the late Roman example (Adam, 1990). Its shape is arched at the top and comes down with two legs as in an arch and column. It is moulded

round. A strip of mould forms the base line of the pseudo-column legs, giving it a balanced overall design. The location of the window, the wall colour, colours of the moulded frame, the glass and the steel are harmonious. It is perfect, and aesthetically pleasing.

4.2.8 *Doors and Doorways*

The portals to buildings located in Osogbo field are paneled in wood, iron and steel, as well as bullet-proof doors. They have door frames with or without elaborate designs. The paneled doors are engraved into four or six rectangles and a strip of bar after each rectangular unit of panel. The medium of execution is hard wood. There is fan-light at the top of the door with glass and wood frames to bring in light when the doors are shut on the higher floor level and the louver-like phenomenon on the lower floor. On the lower floor is a goat gate for non-access to goats and their menace as shown in Plate 4.17.



Plate.4.17. Ancient Ornamentation style showing Fanlight Window

Other varieties of doors in the ancient ornamentation genre are exemplified as illustrated in Plate.4.18 and 4.19. Plate 4.19 has an iron goat gate



Plate. 4.18.Top Left: Panelled door with cocoa leaf central design

Plate. 4.19: Doorway with goat gate

Plate 4.18 is an engraved panel door with the design of a cocoa leaf as central motif. The cocoa leaf design is embedded in a square box and this unit takes about half the door's height and size. Other designs round the cocoa leaf are two rectangular as well as landscape shaped objects of turned stripes of tiny wood after the order of Venice balusters variation of 1630 (Adam, 1990) above and below it. Three of the same stripes of tiny woods stand embedded in embossed rectangular square shapes. The whole door composite stands as the main entrance to late Chief Adedokun's house. Plate 4.19 is the doorway into the house of Chief Ashiru Adedokun's house on No. 11 Matanmi Street, Oke Baale, Osogbo. The doorway is moulded round in cement assuming the shape of an arch and two columns. Also by the doorway is a wrought iron goat gate against the menace of goats in and out of the building. This goat gate is made of stripes of steel. 'Z' shaped steel is welded across the vertically arranged steel to hold them in place. The door surrounding at the entrance is a decorated arch and two four corner columns. The columns are not free-standing but pilastered. The medium of execution is earth, rock and concrete. The owner was a cocoa

merchant and trader. For any house to be this outstanding in spite of its age, it follows therefore that the owner must be opulent.



Plate.4.20. Top Left: Embossed Paneled door of the Modern Ornamentation genre
Plate 4.21. Top Right: Engraved wooden door of the Modern Ornamentation genre

The modern design as earlier noted has less overall decorations. The doors are mainly panelled and the doorways have little or no decorations as illustrated in Plate 4.20 and 2.21. Plate 4.20 is divided into five compartments. Each compartment has two embossed square units except the middle section that assumes almost the overall length of the door giving it a rectangular shape. Plate. 4.21 is an engraved wooden door with three compartmental divisions. The top and bottom compartments have two turned Venice order of baluster engravings (Adam, 1990) while the central compartment is a generated order of a big circle surrounded by four smaller ones at the corners. The turned Venice order of baluster engravings was brought forward from the ancient design.

Next to be discussed are the contemporary door decorations. The door decoration is engraved or embossed as well as made of either steel or wood. It is illustrated in Plate 4.22.

Plate 4.22 is an engraved door with the motif of pseudo arches and columns replicated symmetrically. In-between the pseudo columns are three patches each of non-see through glasses vertically arranged one after the other. The surroundings of the door is extended out and firmed to the doorway. It has a flat top with moulded design. It is a two leafed door. In other words you can open one half and leave the other half unopened. The door medium appears wooden but is steel as well as padded such that they don't sound steel-like when knocked on.



Plate 4.22 Top Left: Engraved Contemporary door design

4.2.9 The Fascia board

The fascia board is the strip of wood closest to the corrugated roofing sheets all round the building. Its purpose is to guide against an attempt by the wind blowing to uproot the roofing sheets. It is tropicalied to cater for the weather conditions. The ancient form of fascia board decoration in Plate 4.23 enlarged in Plate 4.24 situated off Oja Oba Market road, Osogbo.



Plate 4.23
Decorated Fascia board in ancient building.



Plate 4.24: An enlargement of a portion of 4.2a

Plate 4.25 shows the modern form of fascia board on 33b Odeolowo Street, Osogbo. It is plain without decoration but painted blue as a means of decoration in relation to other subsisting colours on the building.



Plate 4.25. Fascia Board of a modern Building

The contemporary version is the vertical positioning of the long span roofing sheet but of the size of the regular fascia board in the ancient classification of decorations. The vertical positioning of the aluminum medium roofing sheet in itself forms a design, technically designated as ‘cladding’. The intent is such that the vertical application of long span roofing sheet is a protector for the wooden fascia from getting decayed by rain water as always experienced in the ancient and modern classifications. This form o fascia is a corrective measure of the ancient and modern genre as reflected in Plate 4.26. In other words, the wood still lies behind the protector.



Plate. 4.26. The vertical application of long span roofing sheet protector for fascia board of the contemporary ornamentation classification

4.2.10 Wall Treatment

Wall treatments vary from the ancient through the modern to the contemporary. This is discussed under this sub-heading. The ancient wall decoration design is a form of web network on walls of residential building as illustrated in Plate 4.27. The medium of expression for this decoration is cementing. This is as seen on 19, Fakunle Street, Osogbo. The Landlord is deceased and a surrogate in the residence; Mrs Elizabeth Awojayi was interviewed in respect of the house. The house is 65 years old which brings it under the ancient classification of ornamentation. The web network pattern treatment is total on the walls.



Plate. 4.27. Web treatment on wall as decoration for an ancient taxonomy of ornamentation



Plate.4.28. Granite stone application on sectional part of facade in modern classification of ornamentation

Wall decoration in the modern buildings is partial and situate only on the facade of the building as figured out in Plate 4.28. The medium of design is stone and cement.

The contemporary league of ornamentation below employs the medium of stone tiles. The stone tiles situate as a band midway the height of the building. Its size is window height (top to bottom) round the building as illustrated in Plate 4.29.



Plate.4.29. Shows a window size band of light brown stone tiles as a permanent colour application. This house is at the finishing stage.

4.2.11 Fences

Ancient buildings hardly have fences. Mr. Folorunso's house has a concrete foreground attached to his house, making it exclusive in comparison to the modern building next to it in Plate 5.4. The foreground serves as a platform for folk tales between the elders and the children under the moon light. The building is unique and appears to be outstanding in the midst of more modern buildings. This house in context does not have a fence. The owner however tried to gather as much of the property to himself by this fore front extension and a now dilapidated walling at the back to firm up his territory as reflected in Plate 4.30. In his days, he was a business man and a trader. He was known for the production of herbal cure for little children (Alagbo Omo) he must have been wealthy to have put up this structure in 1950. Some modern buildings do have fences but it is not a common occurrence in Osogbo. Most of such fences were plain after the order of modernism.



Plate.4.30. The rear view of Mr. Johnson's residence at 10 Iso-Isu, Oja Oba showing the attempted walling effect to harness his property together.

Houses have fences in an estate setting, where a piece of land is formally purchased from a land vendor or Government housing estate personnel.

Plate 4.31 is an example of a high fence on Oluwatoyin Villa at Dada estate. Part of the building is still visible because the structure within the fence is a storey building. It is concealed. One could only observe something above the fence. Plate 4.32 is typical of low fence genre in the contemporary classification of decoration



Plate. 4.31 An example of a high wall fence in the contemporary decoration classification



Plate 4.32 is an example of low fence decoration in the contemporary order of classification at the GRA

4.2.12 Gates

The ancient and modern buildings, on which these decorations are, hardly have fences regardless of gates. Gates are entrances into a compound of a building. Plate 4.33 is a paradigmatic illustration of a contemporary classification of gate decoration.



Plate.4.33. An artistically designed low fence supported by two stone tiled columns

4.2.13 Summary and Conclusion

The identified decorative elements on residential building were discussed from the ancient through modern to the contemporary classifications of ornamentation in Osogbo as identified in the study. Overall, 12 different types of decoration were identified on the 105 buildings examined. These are the gable ends of roof and pediments which is not common to all, the aeration holes that allows air into the ceiling usually on the facade, a long stripe of mould round the building top signifying the roof level, the arches and columns of varying sizes and forms, the veranda balusters, the windows and window hoods of all forms, the doors and doorways decorations, the forms of fascia boards, the wall treatments and rustications as well as the gates and fences. A total number of 31 examples were illustrated. Although, not all the decorations could go into the chapter for illustration many more variants of each decoration are assessable in Appendix II.

The collection of ornamentations observed was classified for ease of analysis into ‘historical consideration’ as well as ‘its emphasis or significance’. Artistic ornamentation is a device for architectural accomplishment, creating focal points as well as emphasis but are done in hierarchy. The significant ones are the doors, doorways and surroundings of the door. The door is located at the façade and is the first interaction with a visitor. It is therefore elaborately decorated as presented with overhanging verandas, the columns as well as relief decorations on doorways and the door. Others that are present but less significant are regarded as ‘accents’ to punctuate the buildings. These are decorations on windows, the balustrades, in addition to others itemised. All these contribute to the overall aesthetic appeal on the building.

In the ancient, they have major emphasis. In the modern, it is not so clear as ornamentation application was austere; at the contemporary, they made a big ostensible thing of buildings

decorated. Each of these categories was discussed with respect to their forms and contents and some carry their *private* meanings. The meaning, contents and forms of these ornamentations is discussed in chapter 5 as experienced. In the ornamentation of buildings in Osogbo, people keep decorating and fortifying their houses, they did so stylishly with aesthetics consciousness. Their buildings are not just serving the purpose of shelter but indeed shelter, protection and significant aesthetic experience.

CHAPTER FIVE

AESTHETICS AND MEANING OF ORNAMENTATION IN OSOGBO DOMESTIC BUILDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The Yoruba have a culture that is rich in art and are among the most prolific people in the world of art (Delange, 1974, Ottemberg, 1983, Drewal and Pemberton, 1989). This chapter focuses on the aesthetics and meaning of ornamentation on domestic buildings in Osogbo. Elements such as the windows, doors, and fascia board are embellished with ornamentation. The decorations are seen within their own aesthetic framework. The chapter explains some probable symbolism and functions within the Yoruba cultural system. Behind all this is the idea that Art functions (Lazzari and Schlesier, 2008). Aesthetics connotes beauty. Beyond this, it is everything that contributes to our experience of the artistic expressions of artifacts.

The purpose of ornamentation in buildings is to add beauty to the appearance and make it appealing to the eyes. Lazzari and Schlesier (2008) have noted that ornamentation serves more than beauty in a building. It may also direct particular attention to other elements of the building such as doors and doorways serving as the entrance, the columns and arches, as well as wall treatments. The decorations of these elements not only add to the aesthetic treatment of the building but the meanings are also derived in relation to their functions. The function of an element confers meaning on that particular element; not only in connection with what it metaphorically connotes. In other words, ornamentation on building elements may also be symbolic of wealth, class and power. For instance, a door is a door but it becomes more than a door when decorated. The way the Yoruba do it is more than entrance or passage, but also beautifies it to make the door welcoming to whoever is coming in.



Plate 5.1. A decorated Ancient door in Glass and Wood Media

The door must always serve the function of welcoming whoever is coming there. The entrance on the facade calls for attention to itself by the way the Yoruba apply decoration on it (Denyer, 2009).

Susan Denyer's allusion of the decoration on Yoruba doors emphasises the significance of the entrance to the Yoruba people. The door itself tells one the relative importance and the power of the one who owns the house. Yoruba doors and doorways are so important to the Yoruba such that, other ornamentations are metaphorically *accents* punctuating the building.



Plate. 5.2. A sculpturally engraved Yoruba Door with historical images and day to day activities. Source: Borgatti (1969)

The ornamentation on the elemental decoration of this door indeed signifies class, power and wealth. The use of beauty expressed as symmetry is common in the design of buildings, houses as shown in the ancient designs as well as other contemporary decorated houses and, more recently, cities. Taking into account the entire sensory life of human beings, contemporary urban planning, architecture, and landscape design all have an eye for aesthetics. In this sense, modern design is interested in the shape of a city, house or park for more than its function. We are also interested in form as well as the expression of both meaning and beauty in our surroundings.

Ornamentation also serves as an impressive marker of wealth and power since it is expensive to create and install, especially on a large scale (Whitehead, 2010). It is aesthetically pleasing, adding interest and complexity to a large expanse of bare walls, transforming the ordinary into the sublime. Ornamentation often carries political significance with ornamental elements chosen for propagandistic goals (Whitehead, 2010).

It further discusses the meaning of these decorations in relation to their forms; emphasising the importance of their formal qualities (Panofsky, 2012) and reading their contents as a unit of the structuralist approach in which the social and cultural structures also shape the meaning of the art of ornamentation (Lazzari and Schlesier, 2008).

5.2. Attributing Meaning to Ornamentation

Barthes (1998) criticizes the assumption that an author has authority or ownership over the meaning of their textual work. Barthes argues against assigning text with a fixed ultimate meaning which constantly relies on the intentions and identity of the author, exclaiming that the meaning of text is not exclusively determined nor produced by the writer. The reader attaches it with ideas and concept through their personal Interpretation. He reinforces this by answering that textual meaning is not definitive, nor fixed by the author as words can have different connotations depending on the contextual norms socio-cultural ideas and conditions through which a reader interprets. In the light of Barthes argument, the meaning to the elements of these buildings is accessed through three main approaches as enumerated in the following ways: a formal analysis, an iconographical analysis and an engagement with contextual meaning in relation to Yoruba culture.

Ornamentations on buildings are documents of artists with reference to Cassirer 2006 and the meanings to the following identified decorative elements on Plate 5.3 illustrated building will be established and discussed appropriately. The building shown in Plate 5.3 is atypical and is

as much as possible analysed and its meaning brought forth in relation to its elements of decoration and function. The interpretation given to the elements of decoration in this example will be applicable to other buildings through the ages. Its aesthetic description cannot be estranged from its meaning.



Plate 5.3. Atypical contemporary building form different from the conventional four elevation buildings

Plate 5.3 is an uncommon building indeed, exclusive of the cream of buildings at the GRA in Osogbo under the contemporary genre. The overall form metaphorically assumes the shape of an open multiple folded flier. The fold is more evident following the shape of the roof (annotated 1-7) in relation to the corresponding corner of the building. Each fold terminates at the corner of the building. The third fold is at the location point of the only visible column on the building. The crown of the column is decorated and attached to the concrete roof level as well as a solidly prepared base for its pedestal. The column emphasizes the door entrance with bidding welcome to whoever is allowed through the gate on fold 2-3-4. Above the door is a balcony which is the only indication of a floor level definer. The balcony is decorated with sheets of grayish opaque glass and dark coloured steel. The dark steel colour of the balcony blends with other window sizes and the steel window panes.

The glass window type is for security with reflective mirror. In which case, one cannot visualise the inside of the house but those within can see whoever outside. The sliding window types are glass and steel, probably aluminum painted black. The windows have no decorations after the order of the post-colonial design. The decoration free window appears a spill-over from the post-colonial to the contemporary ornamentation epoch.

The building colour is a lighter hue of pink to that of the roofing sheet, giving it a harmonious blend. The Fascia board is veiled with cladding; giving protection to the underlying wood from decay, which may be a consequential to weather conditions. At first sight the building appears so drab and plain. On the other hand, it has more than enough to discuss and analyse.

5.3 Elemental Decorations in Domestic Buildings

This section further analyses the various ornamentations in domestic architecture in Osogbo. The decorations in these buildings are analysed in terms of formal, functional and symbolic qualities. While the aesthetic qualities of decoration are to be respected, for a complete appreciation one must go beyond the visual appearance and examine meanings or content of building decorations and ornaments. A verbal description shows the way to the meaning of form (Rieser, 1966). The inherent meaning of decoration can stand for the representation of place and/or the representation of the society occupying that place. In addition to symbolic meaning, decoration can impart information and enhance legibility. The decoration of buildings in the city can act as a collective symbol, something that stands for a town and with which citizens identify (Moughtin, Oc and Tiesdell, 1999).

The variations of extant decorations in the elements of the buildings are picked for discussion as well as analysed with respect to their form, content and meaning. These are the

gable ends of roof, the fascia board, aeration holes surrounding, roof level definers, arches and columns/beams, windows and window panes/hoods, the wall and corners/floor level definers, doors and doorways, and balustrades comprising of the balconies in addition to the verandas.

5.3.1 The Gable Ends of Roof

5.3.1.1 The Ancient

The first of the series for discussion is the gable end of roof observed in Plate 5.4. This roof type is unique as well as adds to the aesthetics of the building. Simplicity is the hallmark of a gable roof. It features two planes of identical size and pitch to form a basic triangle. Plate 5.4 happens to have double gable ends of roof at the facade. The gable serves a variety of purposes. Primarily, they protect inhabitants and their personal belongings from the elements (sun and rain). This angled roof type allows for optimum rain runoff. The peak is commonly converted into an attic (Plate 5.5) as well as provides increased insulation, ventilation and additional storage space. They also enhance the aesthetics of a structure; a roof typically mirrors the architectural style of a building. Climate and weather conditions of a region can influence the type of roof used. In Osogbo, it is appropriate because of the torrential rain falls often encountered.



Plate 5.4. A uniquely decorated ancient building with prominent features located at 10 Iso-Iso, Oja'ba Osogbo



Plate 5.5 An ancient building with attic at the gable roof

The composite arrangement of the attic structure symbolises the crown of a king considering the two arched formations on both sides of the building. The central structure which is the entrance to the balcony of the attic sits as the peak of the symbolic crown; coupled with the curved veranda design. The two arched formations each has the sculpture of a lion in white

colour at the top. A building with these zoomorphic images in Yoruba land signifies the king's palace. One can conclusively say this building is probably an old palace. Incidentally, the Olaniyan's family is a lineage of the king in Osogbo. The medium of execution is mixed media. It is a combination of majorly cement, glass and wood for the window and window panes. The gable design is obviously absent in the modern and contemporary classification of the art of ornamentation in Osogbo domestic architecture.

5.3.2 The Fascia Board

5.3.2.1 The Ancient Fascia Decoration

Fascia is an architectural term for a frieze or band running horizontally and situated vertically under the edge of the roof cover. Its primary purpose is to enable a neat finish of the rough edges of the roof. The vantage position it occupies particularly in ancient Yoruba domestic buildings affords the occasion for artistic expression to be executed on it. It typically consists of a wood medium board exemplified in Plates 5.6a and 5.6b. The lower half of the fascia expresses a replicated motif of a three toe footed design situate beside each other, while the example in Plate 5.7 represents a rhythmic expression of a palm wine bowl placed one after the other. The overall design gives it a harmonious appearance.



Plate 5.6a: Top Left showing a complete building with Fascia design.

Plate 5.6b: Top Right is an enlarged extraction cropped from Plate 5.6a emphasizing the decorated Fascia



Plate 5.7a: Top Left showing a complete building with Fascia design.

Plate 5.7b: Top Right is an enlarged extraction cropped from Plate 5.7a emphasizing the decorated Fascia

5.3.2.2 *The Modern Fascia Board*

The Fascia board in the modern age is represented with a plain plank of wood medium in Yoruba domestic buildings as illustrated Plates 5.7a and 5.7b without any form of decoration as most modern elemental designs are scantily decorated. It is either finished smoothened or painted in colour that is complimentary to colour of the building.



Plate 5.8a: Top Left showing a complete building with plain wood medium Fascia board

Plate 5.8b: Top Right is an enlarged extraction cropped from Plate 5.8a emphasizing the partly decorated Fascia

Fascia board consists of individual boards placed at the end of the roof where it meets the house. The fascia board keeps the roof from looking like a separate area and evens out the

appearance, making the roof look like an extension of the home. The rain gutters often attach directly to the fascia board. Visually, it adds firmness and aesthetics to the roof as well as the building in general. The primary function of fascia board is to give protection to the building and roof. The board is a border that prevents the end of the roof from touching the side of the building. The fascia board pushes the water off the building by a few inches, keeping the water away from it.

5.3.2.3 The Contemporary Fascia

The contemporary varieties of the fascia board are two types in nature. The first brand of decorated fascia of the contemporary genre is the cladding type. This is the vertical application of the long span roofing sheet with the height of 6” to 8” covering the wood medium, thereby protecting it from rot by consistent rain water as illustrated in plates 5.9a and 5.9b



Plate 5.9a Illustrates cladding on a complete contemporary building Fascia.

Plate 5.9b Shows a close-up cladding in Plate 5.9a.

The other brand of the contemporary style is that with mould round the edge of the roofing sheet after the order of the ‘reverse ogee’. Its appearance is like a seal, pinning down the roofing sheet to the walls. It is beautiful and materializes to be a better workmanship than the inverted long span roofing sheet as reflected in Plates 5.10a and 5.10b. It is a good development and improvement over the vertical application of the aluminum roofing sheet

type. Its medium is concrete and often painted white. Observing its position on the building, this contemporary genre of fascia serves as a roof level definer absent in the modern classification but manifests in the ancient with strings of mouldings just below the roof depression in between the gable ends. The roof level definer marks the position of the roof level in a building. The so far discussed decorated elements of the building may not be glaring; that is, the gable, fascia in addition to the roof level definer, however they add both technical as well as aesthetic precision to the building appearance. This leads to the next discussion of the floor level definers/dividers.



Plate. 5.10a. The ‘reverse ogee’ fascia board style on the contemporary classification



Plate 5.10b, The reverse ogee order of fascia is prevalent in the contemporary

5.3.3 *The Floor Level Definers (FLD)*

5.3.3.1. *The Ancient FLD*

The floor level definer is an elemental position in a storey building demarcating the floors. It is positioned half way through the building height. This elemental feature identifies the position of floors in buildings but is sometimes decorated as indicated in the ancient genre of decoration in Plates 5.11, 5.12a and 5.12b. They are variants of decorated floor level definers of the ancient classification. It is represented as continuous linked units of chain design, appearing like a band round the storey building. The chain-like design is relieved on the wall and limited by two stripes of mould at the top and bottom. The medium used in execution of both illustrations is concrete. They are pleasing to the eyes.



Plate 5.11. A Band of Floor level Definer of an Ancient Classified Ornamentation in domestic building in Osogbo.

The band is engraved with patterned design. On the upper part are curved rectangular moulds after one another with a rosette at the centre of each rectangle. This is repeated round the building. Next to this on the same band is a mould strip, a plain band and finally another moulded strip marking the lower edging of the band as illustrated in Plate 5.12b



Plate. 5.12a. A band of floor level definer in the ancient classification of decoration



Plate. 5.12b. Close-up of 5.12a.

5.3.3.2 *The modern FLD*

The modern FLD which is in Plate.5.13 below is a building with a single strip of protrusion on the wall as the floor level definer. The protrusion is about 4cm thick round the building. The medium of execution is concrete. It appears so tiny and insignificant to the size of the building but, its overall appearance gives technical firmness to the building as well as contributes its aesthetics.



Plate 5.13. Shows a long strip of protrusion on the wall as FLD

5.3.3.3 The Contemporary FLD

Plate 5.14 is another illustrated example of the contemporary decoration variant. Two indicators here mark the FLD. There is a thin line divider protruding or rather a relief kind of strip halfway the building height. This goes round the building but the cycle is not complete. The second indicator of the FLD is the differentiation of the colour hues. In this circumstance, the building wall is turned into a painting canvas on which two colours were applied differentiating the floor levels. The interface where the two colours meet is indicative of the floor level. Both the colour differentiation indicator and the relieved protrusion do not completely go round the building. The overall outlook of the building is aesthetically pleasing to the eyes. Plate 5.14 is Mr. Segun Adefila of Segun Adefila Street at the Government Reservation Area (GRA) in Osogbo. Mr. Adefila is a journalist: His house was built in December, 2003. He had renovated the building thrice to meet the standard of the environment. He just included the upper floor balcony and reduced his high fence to a low and a see through one for security reasons. The simplicity of his house is attracting. The façade of his home bears a double twin column over-hanging a vaulted arch. This emphasizes the portal.



Plate. 5.14. A thin, protruding floor level definer (FLD) on a contemporary ornamentation classification genre; in conjunction with the colour differentiation application marks the floor level

Buildings in the contemporary designs are sometimes amorphous. It depends on how magnificent the owner wants his house to be. An example is illustrated below.

Plate 5.15 is a building situate at No 10 Adedapo Adegoke Street. It is 10 years old according to the surrogate interviewed. It is very well maintained and still in very good condition. External viewers would wonder what manner of house this is. This was what actually caught my interest to approach the occupants. This view (Plate.5.15) shows the floor level definer here cantilevered as a storey building. The cantilever effect however does not go round the building, but appears only in selected places as he desired.



Plate.5.15: Cantilever design on this building is suggestive of floor level

In another view, Plate 5.16, shows a 2 storey building with the top small veranda baluster, depicting another floor at that level. The contemporary taxonomy of ornamentation is all about imagining it and getting it executed. It can be described as a period and time for creativity per excellence. The Plate 5.16 of the house appears to be another porch of entry with the evidence of two glass doors on the ground floor. This connotes other entrances into the house without disturbing the head of the house and his guests possibly. This house portends to be a combination of houses in one. This leads us into the discussion of another elemental aspect of buildings called the balcony/veranda balustrades.



Plate.5.16. The cantilevered veranda on the last floor creates another floor level. The building indeed is amorphous but not necessarily shapeless.

5.3.4 *The Balustrades*

5.3.4.1 *Ancient Designs*

The balcony balustrades are located on the facade or as well on the side elevation depending on the building design and contents. A unit of design on the veranda is referred to as a balustrade while the multiplicity of the balustrades is called the balusters according to Adams (1990). The ancient motifs are varied and a particular motif may be replicated on a number of other houses. Figure 5.2 shows one of such motifs assuming the shape of a hand fan. The medium of execution is concrete. It has a fulcrum where the fan feathers are hinged, forming a semi circle. The fulcrum at the same point could be regarded as the handle for the hand fan. The motifs adopted in designing the balustrades are derived from familiar essentials of daily applications consonant to Yoruba aesthetics. The variant in Fig. 5.3 shows a unit of four replicated designs in between 2 columns on Chief Kola Balogun's building; his son Balogun junior was interviewed in respect of his house. His house is 55 years old in 2014. This house

is at the interface between the ancient and post-colonial classification of ornamentation prescribed for this study. The medium of execution of this decoration is also concrete. Figure 5.3 motif is that adopted from an embroidery design, especially on Yoruba men's *agbada*. An 'agbada' is Yoruba men's big garment worn over some under-dress as well as adorned with exquisite embroidery designs as evident in Plate 5.17. One can deduce that Yoruba aesthetics is reflective on material culture of daily life including architecture by juxtaposing the application of their motifs and that ornamentation in architecture of Osogbo has direct link with Yoruba aesthetics. A similar motif is also traceable to Hausa embroidery as reflected by Schwerdtfeger (2007) called *dagi* in his book on 'Hausa Urban Art and its Social Background'.



Fig.5.2. An ancient baluster assuming the shape of a hand fan in Yoruba domestic building

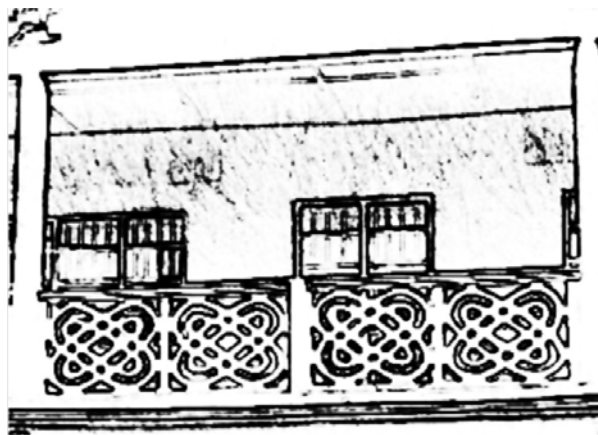


Fig. 5.3. Ancient Concrete Balcony Balusters engrafted from Yoruba embroidery design



Plate 5.17. An *Agbada* embroidery matching plate 5.16 balustrade motif as indicated by the arrows



Plate 5.18 A creative ancient concrete medium veranda balustrade

5.3.4.2 *Modern Designs*

The modern balustrade decorations emerge with a skeletal mode of ornamentation on the architecture of Osogbo domestic buildings as illustrated Plates 5.16a, b, c and d. This was as a result of the evasion of European architects shortly before and after independence in 1960

(Le Roux 2004). The style appears attractive and simple as well as void of decorations. Yoruba accepted it as a new wave of change and houses built were sharp and straight at the edges without ornamentation. Plate 5.19 series exemplified a skeletal form of ornamentation on its veranda balustrades with the medium of iron mongering in addition to concrete. The iron medium style is usually painted black or white in contrast to the building colour. In spite of the minimal decoration, the iron mongering balustrades were still shaped in Plate 5.19a to adopt a circular shape as the iron touches one another, overlapped with railings. This signifies that Yoruba aesthetics is intrinsically embedded as well as potent, in spite of the skeletal decoration circumstance.



Plate 5.19a. Iron mongering design in modern balustrades decoration



Plate 5.19b. Welded straight steel rods as balustrades



Plate 5.19c The use of perforated blocks for veranda balustrades



Plate 5.19d is a close-up of plate 5.19c balustrade

Plate 5.19b belongs to Alhaji Oluwaseun's house on 5b Lawole Street Agbole Aro. He appears to fulfill all righteousness by installing a veranda balustrade in front of his house by

welding bars of straight metal poles together one after the other. Another long horizontal metal pole is used to connect every vertical smaller pole as railings, both at the top and bottom. The overall general appearance serves the purpose of veranda balustrades.

Plates 5.19d is an extracted close-up of Plate 5.19c for a clearer view. This building is located at 4 Lawole Street in Osogbo. The balustrade design is intricately weaved into each other. Two units of the four compartments of the veranda is given a close-up view. Four prominent images like the staff of authority of a king stand conspicuously in each of the compartments. An arch goes over each supposed staff of office descending on both sides to form the legs of another staff of office on the sides. The continued positioning of each arch establishes another staff. The leg of each staff is in between two diagonally crossed bars in the lower part of the design to form a composite whole design. This motif is fascinating and complicated. The longer it is admired the more interpretation is conceived.

5.3.4.3 The Contemporary Design

The Contemporary ornamentation designs ostentatiously added more elegance to the balcony using the medium of smoked glass and steel as reflected in Figures 5.4 and 5.5. The spatial evidence is shorter than the long range of veranda balustrades that dominate the ancient as well as post-colonial styles. At this period, Yoruba wanted to show their wealth and opulence aesthetically symbolised, which connotes power, class and nobility. The ornamentation however, is a major influence of both Brazilian and Classical Architecture.

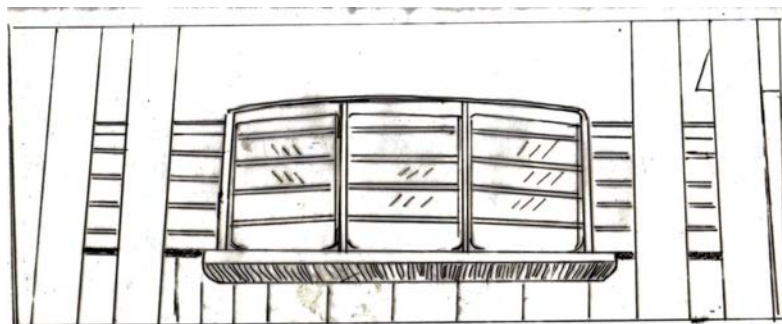


Fig. 5.4. Contemporary elemental decoration in the medium of glass and stainless steel

Figure 5.4 is contemporary elemental balcony design executed in smoked glass and stainless steel with a length of about three to four metres (3/4m). The fore frontal design has three sheets of the smoked glass held by 4 (four) rods of stainless steel. Each sheet of glass is lined horizontally by 4 thinner lines of steel, linking the standing steel poles; forming a continuum to the next pole and thinner horizontal steel. Above the sheets of glass is a railing running over the structure. A step behind on each side of the frontal structure is a wider glass sheet bearing another four horizontal lines of steel as in the former structure. The overall appearance is exquisitely fascinating as well as in itself signifies class.

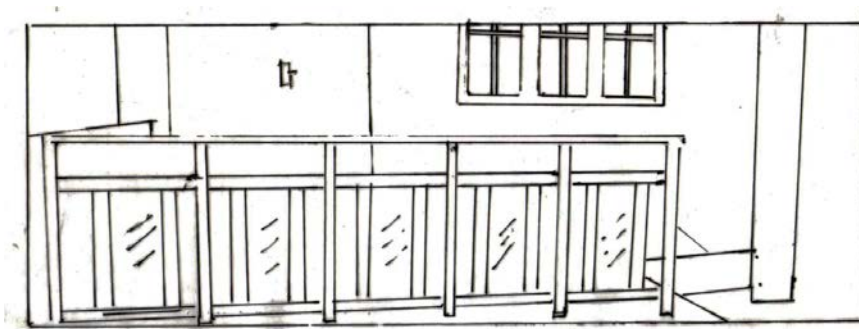


Fig. 5.5. Contemporary elemental decoration in the medium of smoked glass and steel

Figure 5.5 is a small veranda executed with the medium of glass and black painted steel holders. It has its main frame and in between this frames are smoked glass sheets punctuated with 2 (two) rods of steel on a glass sheet. The design is simple but aesthetic, symbolising class.



Plate 5.20 A Balustrade decoration after the Art Nouveau Order of Design

Plate 5.20 is a balustrade design constructed in 2013 on a 2003 building. The medium of execution is wrought iron as well as painted white. The balcony balustrade has three compartments of replicated design. Seated at the base of each compartment is the imagery of a long slim wine goblet which drink is bubbling with vigour shooting out its content. Around the wine goblet are curvilinear designs after the order of art nouveau. The owner decided to upgrade the elemental decoration components of his house in conformity with the environment to sustain its contemporaneity.

5.3.5 *Arches and Columns*

Arches and columns are usually twined in architecture because of their structural co-existence. Hardly can you find one without the other. They are elemental decorations with differing purposes and functions.

An arch is a *pure compression* form. It can span a large area by resolving forces into *compressive stresses* and, in turn eliminating *tensile stresses* (Dym and Williams, 2011). In other words, an arch is a structure that spans a space below it and supports structure and weight above it. The arch formed the basis for the evolution of the vault. There are several types of arches. The most prominent two found in the Yoruba field are semi circular and segmental arches on one hand and on the other; a column is an upright pillar or post. Columns may support a roof or a beam, or they can be purely decorative (Marc-Antoine 2008). He suggests that the column is one of the essential elements of architecture with three main parts; *the capital, shaft and pedestal*.

5.3.5.1 The Ancient Style

A column stands as support to the building. Plate 5.21 exhibits the ancient column design running from the top floor level to the ground floor, interjected at the middle by the floor level. It has a capital attached to the type of arch and runs down to the pedestal base. The first closer column is rounded and stands alone, while the other is half rounded while the remaining half disappears into the wall forming a pilaster. The arch of this column is not totally curved as some others do, but rather flat with the lintel base and forms a serrated design and curve in connection with the column to form a segmental arch after the order of classical architecture. The medium of execution is concrete. This column and arch must have probably been influenced by the Brazilian style of architecture (colonial) and still stands till date. One can then say that the Yoruba have a sense and flair for taste and aesthetics, even as of old.



Plate. 5.21 Ancient elemental design of column and arches

5.3.5.2 The Modern Style

The modern styles of columns are two types. The first example is four sided (Plate 5.22), while the other is rounded and smooth. The first style as earlier remarked about ornamentation in the modern era is austere. The column in Plate 5.22 is slim straight and thin and connected to each one on the floors in the two-storey building. The supposed arches are straight and angular, all executed in the medium of concrete. This type of arches and columns are void of decoration characteristic of modern style of decoration. The column has four planes (four sided) as well as slim, joining an upper column of the same size linked through the decking.

Evidently as reflected in Plate 5.23, the other example has a slight arch with curved edges in connection with the top of the column. The other end of the curve is connected to the base of the straight top decking or floor level divider.



Plate 5.22a: Skeletal ornamentation in modern domestic building. Plate 5.22b: A close up of Plate 5.22.



Plate 5.23a. Modern form of columns as exhibited
This is a variation to Plate 5.22

Plate 5.23b is an enlarged extract of Plate 5.23a

5.3.5.3 The Contemporary Style

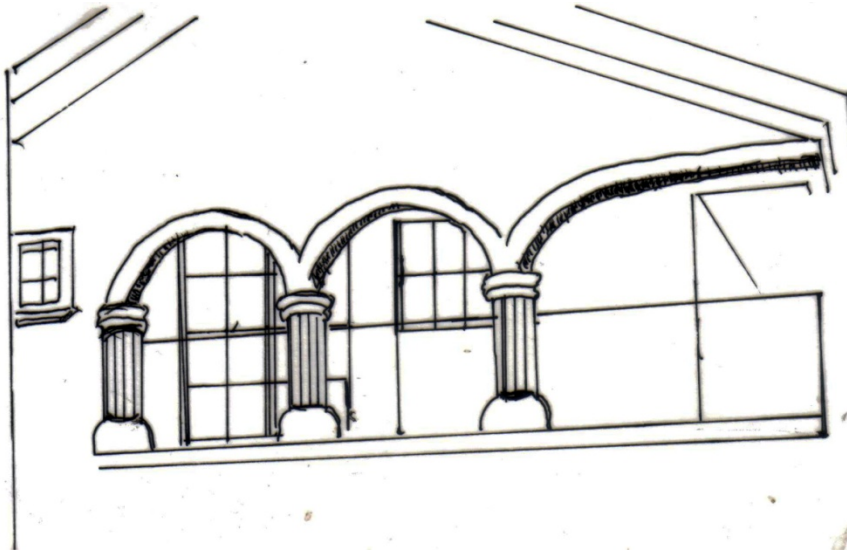


Fig.5.7. Columns and Arches in contemporary elemental decoration

The contemporary style has two variants of the arches and columns. Figure 5.7 is a sketch reflecting the first on the upper floor of a storey building with two arches and three columns as well as a third extended arm of the arch terminating at the edge of the roof. The arches are lined with strings of mould following the shape of the arch. The columns are short and fluted as in most contemporary style. They received the end of the arches into their capitals. The columns are technically seated and that comfortably on three rounded pedestals. They are indeed a paraphernalia of the entrance and doorways. The roof is another example of a gable in the contemporary classification. The composite of these details give figure 5.7 an exquisite appearance in Yoruba architecture in Osogbo. The inspiration may have appeared borrowed, but there is something in the layout that makes it uniquely Yoruba (Cordwell 1984). The second brand of the contemporary column and arch design is reflected in plate 5.24 with a double twin rounded columns and its peculiar type of arch.



Plate.5.24. A Double-Twin Columns running from top to the Ground floor level is characteristic of the Contemporary Classification of Ornamentation. It is a shallow arch though but, it is reckoned as segmental arch in Classical Architecture

The arch and column of this plate are most prominent and imposing. They depict a second brand of contemporary elemental ornamentation. The arch is not that curved but has a bearing in the classical architecture. It is named the segmental arch according to Adam (1990). It has double twin columns running from the top of the building to the ground floor. The columns are crowned with a round moulded capital design and have a pedestal footstool. They are plain and not fluted. They serve the purpose of holding the roof to the doorway defining the entrance. The medium of execution is concrete. Based on the foregoing, it may be concluded that the house would not be complete if the twin columns were precluded. This house as well as other houses within the GRA symbolically command power and class. Other variations of columns are illustrated in Appendix II.

5.3.6 Windows and Window hoods/panes

The primary functions of the window in Yoruba domestic architecture are for ventilation, day lighting and thermal control of the interior part of the building. Windows in Yoruba houses are later development; this probably may be the reason for heightened decorations on them as element of the building in the Yoruba setting in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Traditional Yoruba houses do not have windows since it was considered unnecessary at night because of cold (Ojo 1968). By the time the Yoruba started the installation of windows in their houses, they were initially tiny in size and form. The perception of the idea of windows then did not call for any decoration.

5.3.6.1 The Ancient Style and Decoration

The evolution of windows in the ancient classification of decoration however emerged with decorations such as hoods as well as strings of mould round about them; though still narrow but had a multiplicity of it in the living area as adopted from the colonial masters. The decorations on these windows are both historic and artistic. The design comprises flat bars of smoothened wood arranged one after the other in the order of louver blades. This louver-like design takes half of the full window height while the remaining half takes rectangular panelled designs as reflected in Fig 5.8. Ancient windows are generally hooded as adopted from the colonialists in Brazil.



Plate. 5.25. An engraved wood medium window of the ancient. It is hooded and mould framed.



Fig. 5.8. An ancient window with hood, moulded round and under-window design.

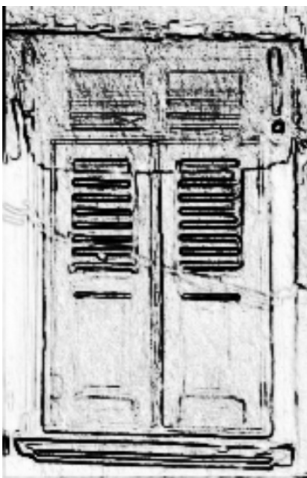


Fig 5.9. Is panelled and a wooden window with carved louver blades.

Fig. 5.8 is an ancient variant designed for the upper floor of a storey building executed in glass medium in addition to wood for the panes and cement mouldings round it. The under-window design is rectangular in form and concaved on both sides. Within it are small round and smooth pebbles of brown stones intricately arranged. At the centre of the stone arrangement is a small moulded rosette flower accomplished with cement medium. The appearance is fascinating. It can be concluded that the Yoruba artisans who fashioned this

designs have sense for taste and beauty (oju ona).The composite arrangement of the stones and rosette punctuation is exclusively Yoruba.

Fig. 5.9 is another variant of the ancient window decoration finished in wood medium. The window is panelled on the lower part; the upper part of this window bears a wooden carved set of louvre-like devices for ventilation when the wooden window is shut. This concept of aeration device in window decoration is laudable in Yoruba aesthetics after the order of 'form follows function' (Gusevich, 1988). The interior of a room becomes hot when the windows are shut; fig. 5.9 will be an antidote for such uncomfortable experience.

Plate 5.25 is a window in its own league from late Susan Wenger's home on Ibokun road, Osogbo. The hood support is curved and accurately heading the slab of the hood. Its engravement is like the Osogbo Art School images. The carved image is peculiar to her preoccupation as the Osogbo Priestess. She acted in that capacity for fifty years. Her zeal and input brought Osun river and shrine to limelight. This eventually warranted Osun River being accorded a world heritage site.

5.3.6.2 The Modern Window Decoration

Other variations of forms exist in window and window hood designs. The earlier ones mentioned are the ancient decorative genre. The next form and style of window decoration for analysis is the modern. The modern forms of windows are wider for more ventilation and surrounded by a frame of protruding concrete called Afamaco. At this time urban development was taking place with consequential increase in population. There arose corresponding increase in crime rate and there was necessity to safeguard and protect one's

self. This initiated the architecture of fear (Agbola, 1997) where iron mongering on windows was adopted. The iron mongering was yet executed with some level of aesthetics.

As earlier enunciated, creativity in Yoruba society is innate, functional and expressive as reflected in the modern window designs. Examining this window formally, they appear wider than the ancient styles, for the obvious reason of ventilation, before the advent of air-conditioners (Plate 5.26). The window decorations are executed with the medium of wrought iron, applied as burglar proof, thereby serving a dual role of protection and aesthetic appeal.



Plate 5.26. The Modern Window with surrounding hood and iron-mongering decoration



Plate.5.27. Modern glass louver window without hood with iron mongering decoration

5.3.6.3 *The contemporary Window Decoration*

Plate.5.28 shows two rectangular windows designed as such in compliance with the shape of the garage for lightening; after the order of 'Form Follows Function'. The garage has a rectangular shape to accommodate cars. The garage enclosure is usually dark when approached from within the house. The architect must have applied his creative intelligence to include these rectangular windows after the shape of the garage. My guess is that the windows are not designed for opening but just for day lighting. Plate 5.29 is a wide sliding window. The medium of execution is glass and aluminum as well as buried in the building wall. It is neither hooded nor mould framed. Its simplicity gives it its own class and aesthetics.

Plate.5.30a is another variant of the contemporary window decoration. Its medium of execution is glass with aluminum frames. It has a moulded frame round it. The base line strip of mould is a bit longer than the window frame and gives the overall

window as well as the mould design a balance. Below the frame is a terra cotta adorned base, about the size of the window. It forms an under-window design after the order of the ancient taxonomy. It has a different colour to the wall and adds its own beauty to the overall window decoration.



Plate.5.28. Two rectangular windows of the contemporary genre designed as such in compliance with the shape of the garage for lightening.

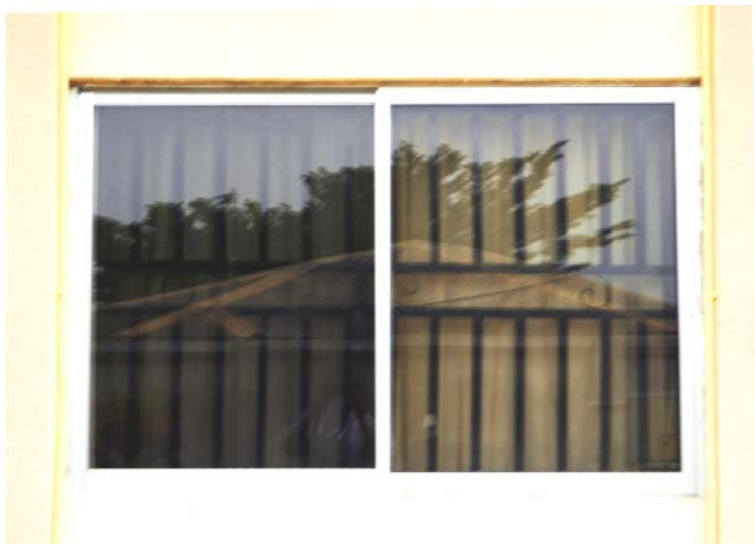


Plate.5.29. A sliding window in the wall of a building in contemporary classification



Plate.5.30a. Top Left: A contemporary window design made of glass and steel. It has a mould round it.
Plate.5.30b. Top Right: The only window design in the contemporary league with mould and hood. This time in form of a vault

Plate. 5.30b is a window with hood. The hood is a vaulted arch after the order of the classical architecture. This will be the first example ever located in Osogbo. It is so tiny and probably will be the window to a lavatory. The two sides of the window is decorated with a straight and relieved but grooved stretch of concrete about the same width as the vaulted hood. It looks good and unique. The medium used is reflective glass and painted aluminium panes in addition to concrete.

Plate 5.31 is atypical window that was located in the contemporary classification of decorations at the GRA in Osogbo. This is the ‘Oriel window’ type. It is semi-circular window design. This window type can be traced back to the late middle ages. It is a window that projects from the facade of an upper floor. In England about the late medieval ages, such projection on a lower floor is called a ‘Bay’ window (Adam 1990). In other words, the Plate 5.31 window type is a projection from both the upper and lower floors giving it a nomenclature of Oriel and Bay window. But for this research, it will be referred to as an Oriel window. Historically, the Oriel window was

defensive in origin; by being able to monitor assailants without being noticed from within. This window type came to have a luxurious character with seating space and large areas of glass in the late medieval ages (Adam 1990). The type in Plate 5.31 is a modification to the late medieval age form (Fig. 5.10) as the content in height is half glass and half concrete/stone tiles. This corroborates Cordwell's observation that the Yoruba adopts change in their culture. Anything or idea imported is never taken hook line and sinker but slightly modified to suit their cultural setting making it exclusively Yoruba or Nigerian.



Plate 5.31

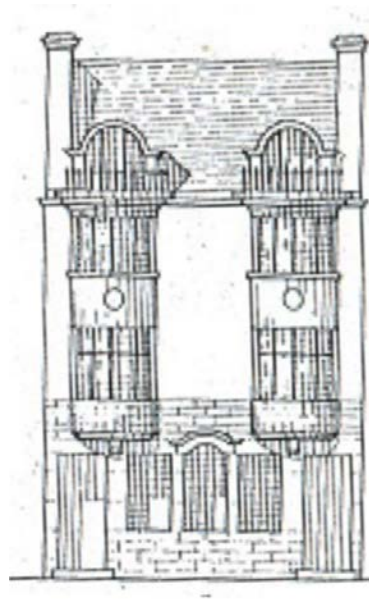


Fig. 5.10

Plate 5.31. An Oriel window type of the Late Medieval Ages on Contemporary Building Classification
Fig 5.10. Top Right: A sketch of Late Medieval Age Oriel Window. **Source:** Classical Architecture. Adams, R., 1990

5.3.7 Doors and Doorways

The portal of building is mostly adorned with decorations and by this we talk about the door and its surroundings. These embellishments are on the door and door frame in addition to

doorway. Doors and doorways are passages into buildings. The doors are a kind of portal leading into a building. They are meant to control movements in and out of domestic buildings. It is a focal point of any house, as the point of entry is considered a life-giving force (Igbaro 2014). The earliest Yoruba doors were made from the wood medium. This afforded them the flexibility of carved decorations executed on them. These portals are doorways and are mostly decorated as well as their surroundings. Yoruba doors and doorways designs are always welcoming the visitor as well as the visitor instinctively as well as consciously receiving the announcement of entering a home.

5.3.7.1 *The Ancient and Modern Doors*

Plate 5.32 entrance surrounding decoration gives an impression of about entering a cave into the big building depicting some uniqueness. On second thought, the wall is more like a support for the wall from falling over which is real architecture. This building is at No. 4 Okeola street, Osogbo, belonging to Mr Yusuf Fashola. It is about 100 years old. It has prominent features of the ancient decorations. The ancient style is adorned with wooden door frames, as well as engraved panelled doors. Most houses have fanlight above the door for day- lighting. Some fanlight compartments are replaced by a louver-like covering as shown in Plate 4.17 in Chapter Four, which is preponderant in both ancient and modern classifications.



Plate 5.32a and b: Decorated Doorway depicting a cave-like in-road to the building



Plate 5.33. (Top Left) Typical Paneled door of the Ancient order

Plate 5.34. (Top Right) Typical Paneled Yoruba door of the modern classification

Plate 5.33 is a typical ancient panel door on which is carved cocoa leaf depicting the profession of the owner. The owner had his carpenter carved his business product on the door (cocoa leaf). Plate 5.34 is a modern panelled door divided into five compartments separated by a smoothened bar of wood. Each compartment is further symmetrically designed with a relieved pyramid form. The centre of the five compartments is a single undivided unit relieved with the same pattern of decoration.

5.3.7.2 *The Contemporary Doors*



Plate 5.35. Engraved Contemporary door with pseudo pilastered design doorway

In Yoruba buildings, whatever adornment has to be added to a house/building; the issue of security is always put into consideration. The addition of such devices of security to building is implemented and that, stylishly. Such security doors are shown in Plate. 5.35. They are decoratively engraved and bullet proofed. The door phenomenon from ancient times to date is a continuum talking about the emphasis and improvement over-time based on responsive societal demands and change. Some late comers would want to live like the rich and get engaged in robbery and other criminal tendencies. The contemporary ornamentation style adopted the bullet proof doors on houses for protection against such assault.

Plate. 5.35 is an exemplified contemporary door design. It is engraved with some other design motifs. The surrounding is extended outwards and firmed to the doorway, which is characteristic of contemporary doors. It has a pseudo-moulded arch and columns. (The arch and columns are decorations and not the real thing.) The door has an extension of opening if

the need arises, otherwise it is permanently locked. The ratio of the extension is one-third of the door size. This is the form of this brand of door.



Plate 5.36 is a panelled door in a contemporary building with Innovated fanlight at the side and top

Plate 5.36 is a contemporary door achieved through the wood medium. It is paneled with its surrounding extended to the front and firmed up to the doorway. The attraction to this door is the extension to its left hand in framed glass and an arch shaped glass at the top. This is an innovation of the fanlight phenomenon of the ancient. This modification is much bigger than the ancient type and extends over the framed glass portion on its left hand side. This serves the purpose of admitting of natural light at day time when there is no need for electricity.



Plate 5.37. Top Right: A contemporary engraved door with human figures

Plate 5.37 is another wood medium constructed contemporary door design engraved with anthropomorphic figures. The door is sub-divided into five compartments with scenes of human day to day activities such as; farmers returning home after a day's work, women at work in the kitchen pounding yam, cocoa harvesters and collectors, a scene at the king's palace with a drummer for unlimited festivity in the king's habitation; the king should not have any means and moment of sorrow but ever having resounding joy as well as pleasure at all times; and finally, a restaurant's scene. Each scenario is framed with a design of deep etching. It has an extended surrounding consonant to contemporary door design. It is indeed interesting. These are the doors as discussed through the ages of ornamentation classifications.

5.3.8 Wall decoration

5.3.8.1 The Ancient Wall Decoration

Wall decoration in ancient building in Osogbo varies and it is expressed in different ways. The significance is for aesthetic embellishment and depiction of class and power at least in their time. The varieties manifest in terms of web-like design with the medium of cement linings on all or portions of the wall and mostly on the facade (Fig 5.11 and Plate 5.38). The facade is the first encounter one has with any house and this tells a lot of stories as well as provides some impression. The web-lined wall decoration design is exclusively Yoruba

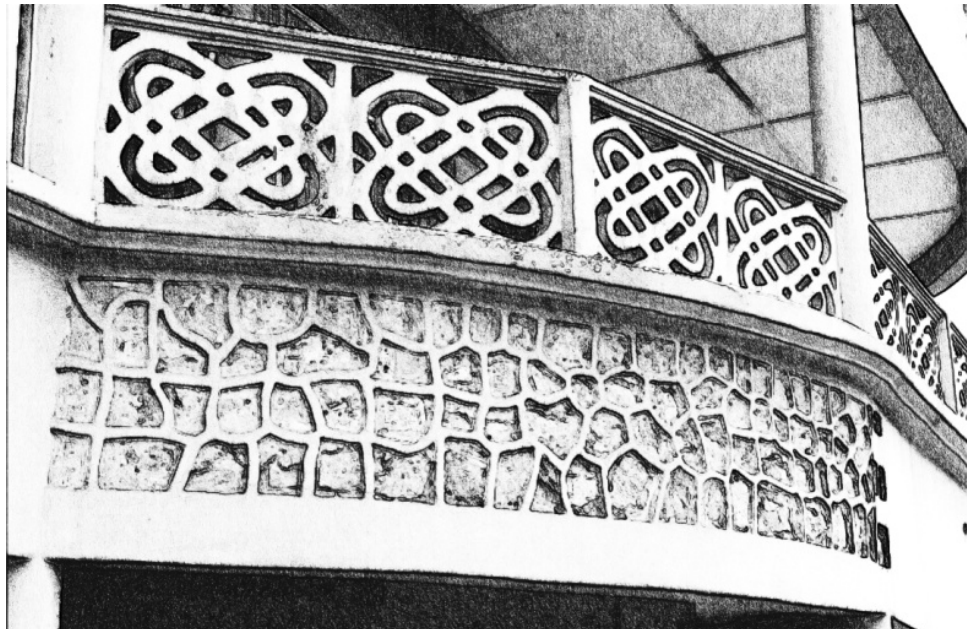


Fig.5.11. Chief Kola Balogun's residence with web-like patterning for wall decoration



Plate 5.38. A total wall decoration in ancient building in web-like design

5.3.8.2. *The Modern Window*

The modern design is the granite arrangement on the walls. The background is mostly painted black to contrast and highlight the grey colour of the stones. In some other circumstances, the stones are brownish and a complimentary colour is chosen for its background as shown in Fig 5.12

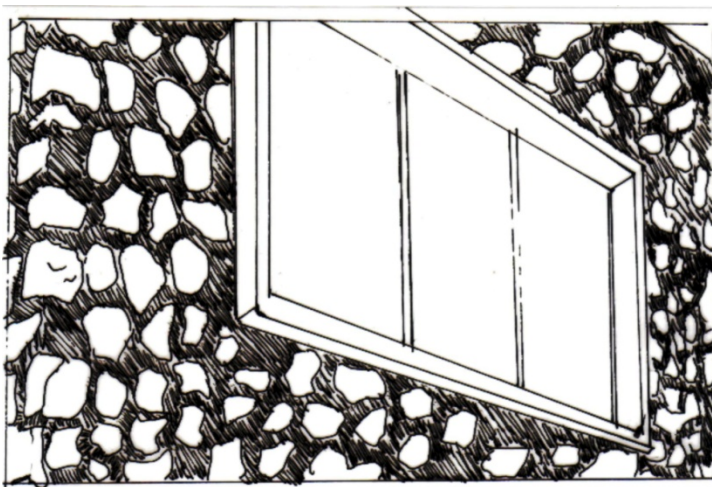


Fig.5.12 The post-colonial granite wall decoration

The wall treatment in the modern building elemental decoration is partly plain and partly applied granite on portions of the building. Some other section of the building towards the back has some perforated blocks. The rock/granite portion may be aesthetically inclined but the perforated blocks are inspirationally functional. The perforated blocks are applied in areas where one desires to create an opening for ventilation without necessarily putting a window or door. The modern ornamentation adopts the use of stone and perforation for walling patterns as identified in Fig. 5.12 and Plate.5.39.



Plate 5.39. Perforated blocks are placed on building walls where a door or window is not desired for ventilation

5.3.8.3 *The Contemporary Window*

The contemporary period of ornamentation on buildings is post modern and regarded as the return of ornamentation on buildings. The contemporary classification of decorations embraces more wall decorations than both the ancient and modern classifications put together. These are in the likeness of building corner rustication as found in most contemporary buildings constructed beyond year 2000, different wall stone tiles with diverse colours shapes and sizes, and several forms of wall rustications as will be discussed. This is a derivative of the development of modern technological tools. The content and name of

ornaments may remain the same; technological advancement has transformed most of these ornaments into new forms and dispositions. The new forms of ornamentation are identified and discussed as encountered in the contemporary nomenclature of decoration.

Plate 5.40 illustrates the wall decoration on Segun Adefila Street of the GRA in Osogbo. To the right of the column is a structure with slant roof. The walling effect of this structure is a type of stone tile medium, blending with the overall colour of the building. It looks smooth and polished. It has different colour hues ranging from grey through beige, cream and light brown. All these colours are resident on the overall building colouration. The colour harmony projects the building's outstanding position on the street. Each building on this street has its own uniqueness and outstanding peculiarities.

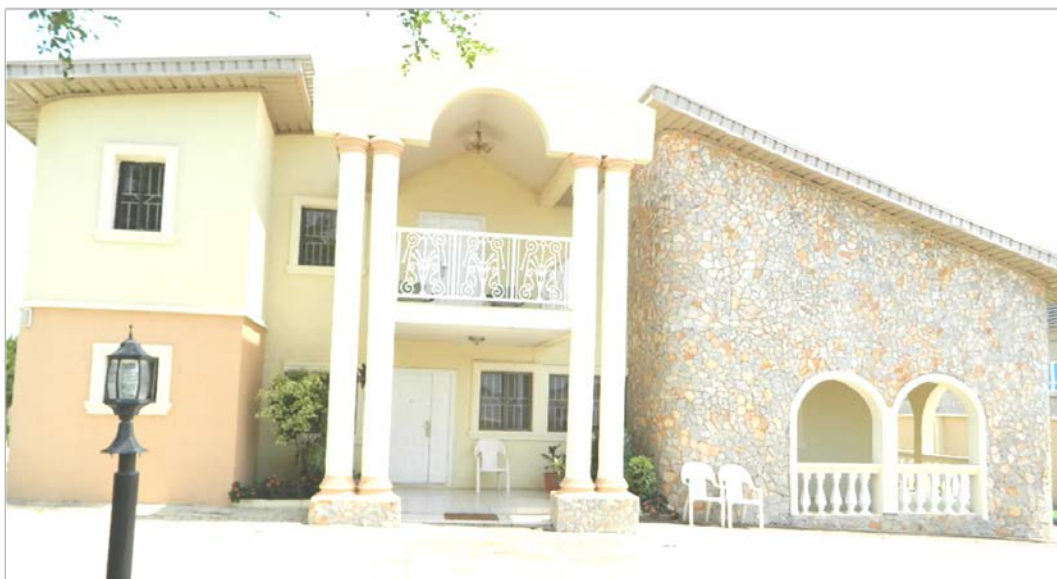


Plate 5.40. Contemporary Wall Decoration with smooth stone tiles.

Another example of stone tile decoration was identified on Mr and Mrs Ogunsola's residence on Segun Adefila Street at the GRA (see Plates 5.41 and 5.42). The house is just one year old according to Mrs. Ogunsola (owner and wife of owner). The stone tiles on the facade of the building are two different types. The first one is the rectangular almost flat

stone tiles chipped into the walls of the prominent segmental arch and columns encountered as one approaches the entrance. This brand of stone tiles one comes across in most contemporary ornamentation buildings. The second is the smooth type on the far left behind the columns. These two combinations add beauty to the structure coupled with the two colour hues applied on the walls. The couple are interior and exterior designers. They have been able to put their professionalism to play on their residence.



Plate 5.41. Contemporary Wall Decoration with stone tiles.



Plate 5.42. Shows 2 hue wall colouration for decoration



Plate 5.43. This illustration is a closer range of what stone tiles on Plates 5.41 and 5.42 texture look like



Plate 5.44 Exhibits varieties of stone tiles on facade and fence

Other forms and colours of stone tiles are illustrated both on the facade of the building as well as the lower part of the fence in Plate 5.44

Rustication of walls is another form of wall decoration prevalent in the contemporary ornamentation taxonomy. They are found at the corners of buildings and other areas of building walls. The next paragraphs will illustrate and discuss this.

Plate 5.45 is an illustration of building corner rustication prevalent in most contemporary decorations. It is sharp and apt at its location on the building. The content is concrete and coloured in harmony with the colour of the building. One example of wall corner rustication is identified in an ancient group of decoration. The rustication is unlike what is found in the contemporary order, but quite similar in the same position of building corner as illustrated in Plate 5.46. This shows the continuity of wall corner rustication from ancient to the contemporary.



Plate 5.45. Top Left and Right: Wall Rustication on building corner as contemporary decoration

This kind of corner rustication is like a segmented block of concrete adhered to the corner piece (columns) of the wall. It looks beautiful and appears to firm up the dilapidated building.

Wall rustication and other forms of decorations on walls of buildings are good and aesthetic in nature. People tend to use them in substitution for colour applications. They keep clean and are being renewed when washed as often as it rains, thereby, keeping them ever fresh. They are not affected by sunshine and are aesthetically beautiful, adding glamour to the building that bears them.



Plate 5.46 Wall Corner Rustication in Ancient Decoration of Buildings on Kaka Street, Osogbo

A brand of wall rusticated located at No.10 Adedapo Adegoke Street in Oroki estate is 6” or one and a half centimetre by a quarter piece rough slab arranged side by side vertically and horizontally at the corners of the building, edge of pilastered columns, under the windows and running below the window level as illustrated in Plates 5.47–5.49. These portions are rusticated to give it some aesthetic effect and the signature of rustication.



Plate. 5.47 Wall Rustication on Building Corners **Fig. 5.48.** Wall Rustication below Windows and Pilasters



Plate. 5.49. Wall Rustication runs below Windows with different geometric shapes and sizes



Plate. 5.50. A band of wall brown stone tiles runs the window size round the building

Plate 5.50 is a band-like form of stone tile medium of decoration. The band height is window size right round the building. Its intent is to suffice the use of colour at that level on the building.

The general use of stone tiles whether intentional or otherwise is used to add colour as well as beauty to the building outside the regular colours used in painting buildings. These tiles add a variety of colouration to the building thereby enhancing its beauty.

5.3.9 Fences

The phenomenon of fences is virtually absent in both ancient and modern categories of ornamentation. Fences are only seen in the contemporary taxonomy of decoration as well as abound in varieties. A fence as its name implies is used to harness the portion of a piece of land or several acres of land together as a whole. Its purpose is to mark a boundary wall for demarcation and differentiate one portion of land from another. It is used to differentiate each one's portion from one another for the avoidance of disputes and conflicts among neighbours and communities.

5.3.9.1 *The Contemporary Fence*

The mode of fence design adopted by land owner is left to his or her prerogative. The order of fences in the contemporary decorative classification is either low or high. The low fence does not connote anything one can easily conjecture. By this nomenclature, it is meant that the fence is about half or three-quarter the concrete height of a normal fence and the remaining half or quarter finished up by steel or iron mongering. In which case, an appreciable part of the building within can be viewed from outside even if it is a bungalow.

The high fence on the other hand, means the fence is so high that you don't have a clue to whatever is happening on the other side of it. These are two categories of fences that are available in the contemporary decorations. Each one encountered is discussed in subsequent paragraphs.

The origin of a high fence stems out of the construction of the architecture of fear (Agbola 1997). The fear of burglary or unwanted intrusion was the initiative behind the high fence syndrome. The Nigeria societies live in a situation which made the Yoruba to coin a proverbial adage such as '*Ikun nde dede, dede nde'kun*'. In other words, residents changed their fence designs and construct based on the experience they had of the men of the underworld. The underworld adopted the technique of following their victims into their compounds in the evenings at gun point with the gates locked behind. The high fence allows them to have as much time as they would without any interruption. The landlords later thought of a low fence such that when men of the underworld strikes again someone would capture the scene and quickly call for help. This has really worked. However, low fence is not advisable in a lonely surrounding.

Based on this security requirement, the Landlord of No. 5 Segun Adefila street, GRA Osogbo had face-lifted his house up to three times. This was done firstly, to make his house design

compliant with other more contemporaneous buildings around the vicinity and secondly, to respond to safety measures. The fence was re-modeled from a high fence to a low one. Most fences of the contemporary order of ornamentation encountered in the course of this work have low walls, but with some degree of variations. The structure is usually about half height of concrete work (about 2m) and the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ height steel design as shown in Plate 5.51. The steel is after the order of art nouveau. See other variations in Plates 5.52 and 5.53. The fences add to the beauty of the building as well as constitute part of the general urban landscape. Some of these fences remain low for security reasons such that if criminals attempt to enter the residence, they are easily seen and help comes early enough. Some owners/residents however still leave their fences high. This a matter of choice. Only one out of eight houses has a high fence on Adefila Street



Plate. 5.51 Low fence characterizes contemporary style of ornamentation design

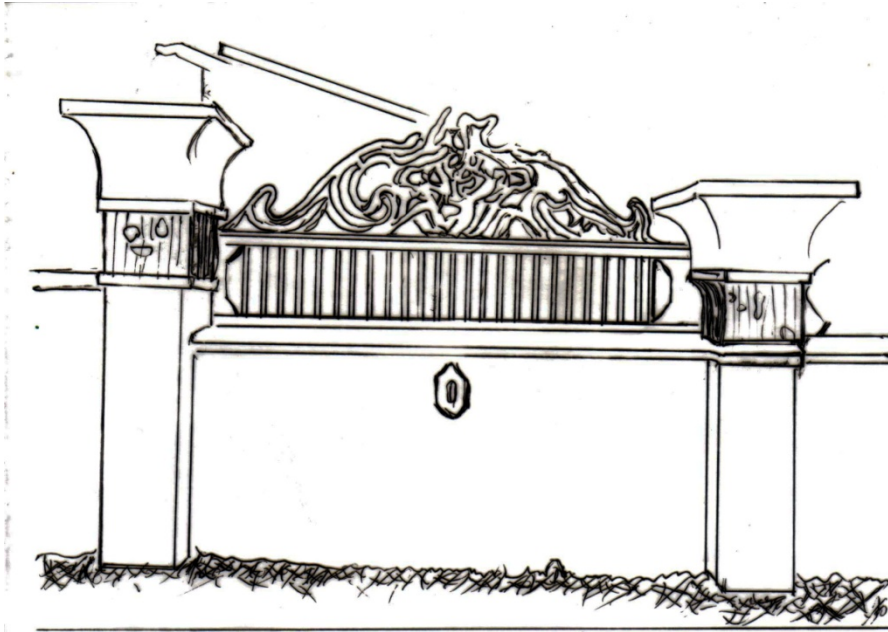


Fig 5.12 The steel design construct is after the order of art nouveau

The ‘art nouveau’ order of fence decorations thrive in variations, adding beauty to the house and community as well as the general urban landscape.



Plate 5.52. Low fence design with aesthetic but offensive steel construct



Plate 5.53 Low fence design at Oroki Estate. The owner added some wound electrified steel works above the steel fence in case the underworld insists to get in.

5.3.10 The Gates

5.3.10.1 The Contemporary Gate

Gates are entrances to an enclosure or valuable assets. They are used to control access and egress of people. It is a barrier from entering a house or any public place except on invitation. They are mostly constructed in the medium of steel. The gates in the contemporary order of decoration in Osogbo residences are identified and discussed in this section of the thesis. They are mainly steel constructs and mostly painted black. The gold colour on these gates is usually applied on elements of design on such gates for high light and differentiation from the dominating black colour. Some relief elemental designs are sometimes applied on them if the gates have to be totally black colour. Some are high, in which case one has no access to view into such compounds, while some are built to the eye level and completed with oriental designs to see through the gate into the compound (see Plate 5.49). Such gates with oriental designs after the order of art nouveau are for security reasons. Most of these gates are in synchrony with the fences attached to them as there is no gate without fences and vice versa. Every land owner has the prerogative to build that which suits him.

Mr. Adefila's gate is constructed following the same security principle as discussed earlier. Others do, some others don't. Other varieties of gate constructs and designs subsist as shown in plates 5.50 and 5.51



Plate 5.54 Low steel gate combined with artistically designed steel top after the order of art nouveau

Plate 5.55 is Prof. Olu-Aina's building gate design located at No 10 Adedapo Adegoke Street in Oroki Estate. The building gate was symmetrically designed. Each half brought together derives a composite whole. Two stalks of flowers emerged a 'V' shape from the base of the gate embracing a big circle with the image of a clock. At the centre of this clock is foliage with a bunch of fruits. The two rectangular geometric forms (in portrait orientation) on each gate having two dot-like circles and a horizontal line at the base are just complimentary to the over-all design. The interpretation of this gate design could be the timely investment of hard work in the owner's life has yielded this great fruit in the order of his building. Prof. Olu-Aina's house/building was built in year 2004 according to his Son/nephew. It is a gigantic house having quite a number of ornamentation design, including arches and columns, wall

rustication, balusters and others. A collection of fruits in Yoruba culture is a symbolic image representing ‘dividend’ or ‘reward’ or ‘wages’ or gift of God following an investment.

In his theory of significant form, Cassirer (2006) argued that images represent fundamental principles or ideas (symbolic values) in a given culture, so works of art are seen as “document” of an artist, religion, philosophy or an entire civilisation. The formalist stripped away culture while Cassirer further contended that significant forms are loaded with cultural meaning. Following Cassirer’s theory, a collection of fruits in Yoruba connotes dividend or reward of labour in Yoruba civilisation as shown in Plate 5.55. This fence is a decorated high fence with an element of ‘art nouveau’ order of design.



Plate.5.55 A decorated high fence but loaded with meaning and with rusticated columns.



Plate.5.56. A ‘mean’ looking gate saying, *you are not wanted here*

Fig. 5.56 is an aggressive looking gate depicting the detestation of any stranger. This was the impression I had on encountering this gate. It appears like the gateway to the residence of the prince of Persia. If you enter, you are on your own. It is a high gate and so is its fence. One could only observe the roof of the storey building behind the gate and fence. The front desk elements (gate and fence) are not looking friendly at all. The gate is solid metal with a high grade gauge up to the top. The upper part has decorations with piercing pointed standing steel on a curved frame work. If anyone gets to that height, he would be pierced. Decoratively, these were painted gold different from the black body downwards; at the centre of the black body is a gold stripe where the gate opens. Two other replicated stripes at the edges and a curved wrought iron flower hanger holding small flowers at the top and bottom of the hanger on each opening.

5.3.11. Summary and Conclusion

The Chapter discussed the aesthetics and meaning of varieties of elemental decorations in the ancient through the contemporary classifications of ornamentation in domestic buildings in Osogbo. Aesthetics is a discussion of beauty but at the point of analysis, it surpasses beauty. It is everything that contributes to our experience of art objects that sums up the discussion of aesthetics. If it engenders our feeling in a way or the other, including that, which engenders our feeling of power and class in domestic building ornamentation then, that is aesthetics. Sometimes it cannot be alienated from its meaning because; it is what is conveyed to us which may be part of our cultural values that we carry.

The phenomenon of these grandeur buildings symbolises ‘pomp and power’ as well as flagrant display of wealth, nobility and opulence. The varieties of ornamentation adopted on these buildings are influences of a combination of the Brazilian and classical architecture. Some of them still reflect the originality of its source while others have undergone modifications to be uniquely Yoruba style.

Ornamentation in domestic buildings has improved the economy as well as the general urban landscape of the city and created jobs and development to the artisans involved in the trade and execution of ornamentation in buildings in Osogbo. Landed properties are being sold in millions of Naira both within the GRA, estates as well as outside the estates; while developed properties are outrageously sold all around the city. In the midst of this ‘pomp and power’, the lowly still survives among them successfully and equally caught in the wave of fashioning their houses aesthetically. Beside the fact that ornamentation is favourable to Osogbo city development, decoration in Yoruba buildings in Osogbo is going back to the features of classical architecture ornamentation.

CHAPTER SIX

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE OF ORNAMENTATION IN DOMESTIC BUILDINGS IN OSOGBO

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This Chapter presents the changing characteristics of ornamentation on residential buildings in Osogbo right from the ancient time (before 1960) through the classified modern time (between 1960 and 2000) and to the contemporary (2000 and beyond). Vlach (1984) has shown that one of the things the Yoruba adopted in the modern era was the Brazilian architecture. The preponderance of these buildings is those that are classified ancient. The more modern ones have veered off a little away from the decorations of the Brazilian but still reflect the form and flexibility of the Brazilian style. As a teacher, curator and critic, Beier's involvement with Nigerian architecture in the 1960s was largely critical, while his patronage served as a channel whereby African artists began to engage, often to create a formal counterpoint, in relation to professionally constructed built space according to Le Roux (2004). Beier (2004), contrasts the 'soft undulating lines of a Nigerian town' with the 'modern buildings: hard, angular, glaring white and unapproachable'. The buildings' design lack 'the basic principle of African life: rhythm'. Beier envisaged the effect of decolonization on the composition of the architecture profession, with Nigerian architects replacing foreign architects. He wondered whether they will be able to produce a 'truly Nigerian style of modern architecture'.

The advent of post-modern classification of ornamentation ushered in decoration and that has become more heightened. This indeed allayed the fears of Beier. Though the present cream of architectural ornamentation came as an influence of classical architecture; the effect is evolving uniquely the Nigerian forms. Each form of ornamentation will be selected to identify and discuss corresponding changes over time. Some ornamentation or decoration

may linger beyond its classified period. For instance, the Kola Balogun's building is at an interface between the ancient and modern periods. It bears some elements of the ancient and those of the modern.

The chapter also looks at the prompt for this change and the socio-cultural issues surrounding such change. Also to be discussed are the producer's of the decorations and their patrons in relation to the contribution to such decorations and choice of designated artisans.

6.2 Continuity and Change of Ornamentation

The ornamentations discussed in this section in terms of their continuity and change are: the floor definer separating floors, the doors and their surroundings, the window types and hoods, the variants of veranda balusters, the fascia boards, the gable ends of roofs, the gates and fences, arches and columns, and wall treatments/rustications. These building elements remain the primary foci of decoration throughout the ages and have generally remained the same; suggesting that the elements of the building remain the same. What have changed over-time are their emphasis, media of execution (materials), as well as the motifs of decoration. What has also changed is how they are more elaborately done in the different periods. What appears to be a continuum is that the foci of decoration remain the same. The first elemental decoration discussed is the floor level definer in addition to the others enumerated.

6.2.1 *The Floor Level Definers (FLD)*

The first form of decoration examined in consideration for continuity and change is the floor level definers. In other words, this study considers what has changed over time, what has fizzled out of ornamentation in building and what has continued. The prevalent style of the

ancient classification of the FLD is a band design halfway through the building height round the building. The designs may vary but still remain a band. Very few have the protruding definer on the building in the ancient classification. The visual illustration is as presented in Chapter Five and in Plates. 5.3, 5.4a and 5.4b. This has a band of repeated motif of octagonal sided circle bearing a cross at the centre while Plate 5.3 has a chain-like structural units joined together and limited at the top and bottom by strings of mould rendered in cement medium. These are often engraved or embossed on the building and common in the ancient classification of design. The FLD in the ancient ornamentation is elaborately decorated. The phenomenon is a continuum as observed in the modern design but with a changed appearance. It manifests here as a protrusion on the wall round the building. This development regarding the motif of design has changed from the ancient style while the elemental decoration subsists. The medium of execution (cement) as well continues. The FLD also manifests in the modern classification style in the form of cantilever. The cantilever effect is a slight outward projection of the building wall of the upper floor, thereby giving the upper floor an enhanced room and space. These are the two variations of the FLD in modern design different from the ancient. Its difference is the change in motif.

The FLD decorative form continues in the contemporary classification of ornamentation but does not have a complete cycle round the building as it is the case in both the ancient and modern styles. Its application in the contemporary classification is sectional on the buildings; suggesting the floor level. The contemporary FLDs manifest three main styles: the cantilever order, a slight depression on the wall and differentiation in colours. The first two techniques are similar to the modern classification while the third style turns the building wall into a painting canvas to appropriate the floor level definer as illustrated in Chapter Five, Plate 5.11 using different hues of colours to demarcate the floors. The interface where the two colours

meet is the floor level definer. Its presence however adds beauty as well as technical precision to the building. Some have it where they deem fit and in different forms.

6.2.2 Doors and Doorways

Doors are kind of portal leading into a building. These portals are doorways and are mostly decorated as well as their surroundings. The portal is common to all ages of decoration classifications and by this we talk about the door and its environment, such as embellishment on the door and door frame in addition to doorway.

The ancient style of door is upheld with door frames constructed out of the medium of wood. It is an engraved panelled door of the same material content. Some others have a mould round the entrance wall. Most ancient doors have fanlight above them for day lighting. Some fanlight compartments are replaced by a louvre-like covering on the lower floor level as seen in Plate 4.17. The fanlight and wood medium produced doors are peculiar to both ancient and modern decorations but appear almost absolutely extinct in the contemporary. One modification of the fanlight window above the door was discovered in a contemporary decoration in Prof. Olu-Aina's residence. The fanlight appears on the main entrance door leading into the living room. That is where light is most needed at day time.

The contemporary door with fanlight assumes the shape of an arch at the top where the fanlight device is located. The arch shaped portion is all glass. There is an extension by the side of the door which in some other door designs would have been an opening portion, but not in this circumstance and the glass portion is framed. This door design must have been purposive for an ample reflection of light into the living room. The door medium of execution is wood and paneled. The wood medium of production appears to cut across the ages. However, the preponderance of the contemporary doors is metal finished medium of

execution. They are more beautifully decorated and glamorously coloured. This infers power as well as class on both the house and the owner.

6.2.3. Balcony Balustrades

Every house/building has a form of balcony within a limited space in between columns. So, the balcony/balustrade phenomenon is a continuum through the ages. The change is only in the medium of execution and motifs. The balcony could be short or long and decorated with balustrades. In the ancient building type, the balcony may take the whole breadth of the building façade or part of it. Some go round the building on the top floor as in Chief Kola Balogun's house at Kola Balogun area and Mustafa Adeleke Olaiya's at Oja Oba residence of Osogbo. The medium of achievement of the ancient balustrades decoration classification is concrete. A change occurred in the modern with the emergence of iron medium of decoration. The balusters evolved in the modern buildings in varieties of decorated steel and further evolved into the contemporary era by both decorated steel after the order of art nouveau as well as glass with supportive steel and aluminum. The balcony is an element of the building and a point that could be chosen for decoration. Balcony ornamentation in buildings is an evolutionary continuum right from the ancient classification of building decoration types and style through the contemporary. The glass and steel balusters really classify a building into its own league. It is posh and aesthetically appealing.

6.2.4 Window/Window Hoods and Window Panes

All houses have windows as elements of decoration. So it is a continuum from the ancient to the contemporary eras but with different sizes, forms in addition to decoration. The ancients have smaller sizes or narrower windows engraved and paneled achieved in wood medium on

the lower floor. The upper floor level is achieved in glass medium and wood for window frames. The hood at the top creating a level of shade for climatic consideration and the sides are moulded. Below the window is an engraved trapezium base form, filled with little sized round and smooth pebbles of stones as decoration. At the centre of the stones is the punctuation of small a rosette flower.



Plate 6.1. Window with Hood, glass and wooden frames on the upper floor of an ancient building

This trapezium base under-window design is a common occurrence in purposively decorated ancient classification of ornamentation and non-existent in the modern. The modern form of windows is transformed wider for more ventilation and surrounded by a frame of protruding concrete medium called Afamaco. This appears to be the only decoration in the modern category of window form different from the ancient and contemporary times.

The contemporary has a variation of sizes, some small, some as wide as in the modern, some half the size of the modern's width, while some are square or rectangular. The contemporary evolved without hoods, but with moulds round the windows for aesthetic reasons. The moulds were achieved in concrete medium. A hooded version of window was found at the

GRA. The hood is in form of a vault. See Appendix II. The vaultedly hooded window possibly could be the window to some convenience room.

The under-window decoration appears again in the contemporary after the ancient order which is non-existent in the modern, suggesting a continuum to the contemporary but missing in the modern category. The change is in the under-window design. The ancient appears trapezium-like while the contemporary assumes the form of the window shutters within the window frame as in Fig.6.2.

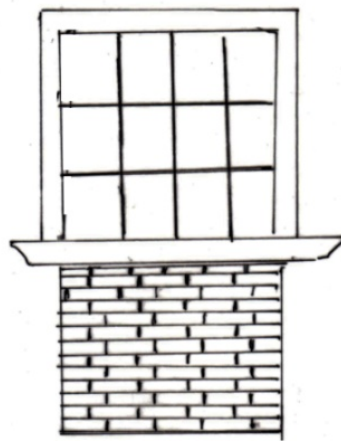


Fig.6.2. Under-window design assuming shutter form within window frame.

6.2.5 *The Fascia*

The Fascia board is more preponderant in the ancient and modern but apparently disappears in the contemporary. It is located at the heave end of the roofing sheet. Its purpose is to prevent the roof from being removed by the hurricane wind as well as provides some level of shade to the building inhabitants. The medium of achievement is wood. It continues in the modern decoration taxonomy. Incidentally, there appears to be a substitution for the fascia board in the contemporary, manifesting in two different forms. The original wood content evolved into the board covered vertical application of the long span roofing sheets called ‘cladding’ on one hand and the moulded hemming of concrete against the wall of the building

from the roof after the order of the 'reverse ogee' in classical designs (Adam,1990). The fascia then is a continuum of ornamentation all through the designated ages of decorations. The second moulded string after the order of reverse ogee in the contemporary appears to serve another purpose other than the fascia. By reason of its location on the building, by the edge of the roofing sheet, it serves the purpose of the roof level definer marking the edge of the roof; that is, executing the works of both the fascia as well as the ring marking the roof level round the building, largely to beautify it. The strings of mouldings in addition to the marks of rustication at the corners of the buildings command strength to such buildings.

6.2.6 Arches and Columns

The columns span through the ages of the ancient, modern and the contemporary classification. Columns appear at the portal entrance and other areas where they function as support to the building. The arches act as decorations to doorways and verandas and must be where the columns exist. The arches disappeared completely from the modern classification of decorations and replaced with the straight angular form. It reappeared again in the contemporary in two forms. The first form is the rounded semi-circle regular arches, while the second assumes the form of segmental arch of the classical architecture. The segmental arch is not as curved as the regular arch but just slightly bent from being called a straight line. Arches and columns are executed in the medium of concrete. The columns have evolved overtime from round forms in the ancient to four- sided in the modern and finally to bigger rounded forms with or without flutings.

6.2.7 Wall Decorations

Wall decoration is a continuum but not a common phenomenon in the ancient and modern buildings. With the advent of new technology and contemporary building materials, the issue

of wall decoration has evolved and now wide spread in the contemporary epoch. The common type of wall decoration in the ancient scene is the web-like design on walls with concrete lines as shown in Appendix II. The decoration on Wenger's house takes the shape of blocks on one another. Some other decorations take the form of the web as reflected in Plate 5.29 and Fig. 5.15. The Wenger house is built of stone and cement in addition to the block patterned with cement medium on it. A kind of wall rustication on the corner of an ancient building was noticed on Kaka Street as shown in Plate. 4.53 in Chapter Four. Wall decoration continued in the modern age in the form of granite medium decoration on a portion of the facade, either in grey or brown stones randomly arranged (Plate 5.17). It is also at this time was the perforated blocks introduced as a form of wall decoration. These perforated blocks are used where the landlord does not desire to install a door or window for ventilation.

Variations abound in the contemporary classification. These are different types of stone tiles with varying degree of colours, wall corner rustication and below window wall rustications as identified and shown in Plates 5.40, 5.41, 5.42 and 5.44. The stone tiles suffice the use of colours and are more permanent. The multiplicity of wall rustication in the contemporary time adds aesthetics to the building and renders the contemporary houses more pleasing. Wall rustication is a continuum right from the ancient to the contemporary age.

6.2.8. Gates and Fences

People bought pieces of land and demarcated them with walls called fences. The fences usually go round the plot with special treatment of decoration at the façade; lower than the other parts of the fence. It is so much adorned such that it gives a fore taste of the building. It adds to the overall aesthetics of the building. The ancient houses hardly have fences talk less of gates. Some modern houses do and more prevalent is the contemporary houses. Gates and fences are so much decorated to add glamour and definition to buildings. Initially, they had

the high wall fences without decoration, it has now evolved to low wall and steel at the top in different shades and designs after the order of the art nouveau; yet for security reasons as earlier discussed.

6.29 *Patrons and Artisans*

The Patrons and Artisans cannot be separated from the evolution and development of the entire system of domestic building decoration. They are discussed as part of continuity and change. The producers of these decorations are known and how their jobs are implemented from generation to generation is discussed.

Five groups of artisans were interviewed. They are the (i) 10 Welders, (ii) 12 Carpenters, (iii) 9 Mason/Bricklayers, (iv) 5 Window and Door Aluminum Designers. This brings to a total of 36 artisans interviewed in the research. They all have one role or the other to play in the building / ornamentation business. Also interviewed were 22 house owners and 28 surrogates in Osogbo. This number of people interviewed had to be because nothing new was forthcoming from interviewing more people. All the questions asked are in Appendix I. The ages of the artisans interviewed range from 28 years to 45 years, and their educational backgrounds range from primary six school leaving certificate to bachelor's degree. The artisan and designer in Plate 6.2 also double as a part-time student in one of the technical colleges, to enhance his status and proficiency in his vocation. He is shown preparing the capitals and pedestals as well as flutings in Plate 6.3 for columns.



Plate 6.2. Artisan Preparing Concrete Medium Capitals for Columns



Plate 6.3. Prepared Flutings for wrapping up Columns

In the ancient, the artisans are conflated with the building itself. In other words they combined masonry with decorations as exemplified by Karimu from Ibadan that worked on Olaniyan's house presented in Chapter Four. A smart artisan would employ a tiler to his crew to execute a tiling job in his commissioned building work.

In the contemporary time, it was observed that more educated folks (Architects and Engineers) commission as well as instruct those with less education. They (the commissioners) have more finesse and visual experience in addition to taste than the artisans. By working with the higher level professionals, the artisans gather more experience and skill through instructed commissioned jobs received. Most of the encountered artisans had their freedom (a kind of graduation) from the vocation chosen within 3 – 7 years. They are happy with their profession as it gives them enough economic gains as enunciated by one of the interviewed.

‘Yes, I am happy with my profession as it gives me more than my daily needs. Something that you do as well as facilitate you sending children to school up to Polytechnic level should be considered something worthwhile’.

However, some less privileged artisans suggested government’s financial assistance to produce more products for display so as to engender more patronage for improvement of their jobs. The following was the statement of the respondent when asked what he could do to boost the enhancement of his job and career:

‘We pray for more patronage. On the other hand I will suggest if Government will make some fund available for us to embark on mass production of our products for more sales and patronage’.

Most of the bosses under whom these people took their training are still alive. The present cream of artisans encountered also has apprentices who work under them and learn the trade. That is their job and what they are doing, hence continuity and change. It is by learning and graduating that we have continuity, but within that system of professional practice itself change is taking place. The decoration is on and continues but the types of decoration are changing. The condition of continuingly producing those who produce the decoration is still on but the conditions are changing as this have to do with the multiplication of specialists

within the building trade. By implication, ornamentation continues and keeps evolving until the kind we have today in 2014. The form of ornamentation in existence today had been since ancient times (before the 60s). They had only evolved.

Under the ancient classification, a surrogate of the Olaniyan's house and family Mr Mustapha Adeleke Olaniyan when asked about the executors of the ornamentation of their family house said:

'It was the mason named Karimu from Ibadan that implemented the decorations using his initiative and experience to erect their two storey building in addition to the decorations.'

In other words, the producers of ornamentation in the ancient are conflated, serving the role of the mason as well as the decorator of balustrades ornamentation in buildings in this circumstance or at best may commission the aspect of balustrades decoration to the appropriate person. This phenomenon continued up to some level in the modern classification. The case is not however the same in the contemporary age. There are more qualified personnel with better understanding of the built forms, and the architects as well as the engineers are part of the built form construct. Again there are people who specialised in execution of building ornamentation (artisans). The professionals (architects and engineers) commission them to implement various decorations thereby, adding more personnel to the building industry. This change has contributed to outstanding designs on contemporary ornamentation in buildings as they are being handled by educated professionals who commission as well as supervise the design given to artisans.

Mr Olaniyan, one of the respondents interviewed further claimed:

'The decorations have no special meanings other than aesthetics to add glamour as well as uniqueness to make the house attractive; that is all there is to the decorations'

This response is common to every other interviewee's view on the meaning of decoration on their houses.

One peculiar challenge in Osogbo is the non-availability of trainees according to an artisan in the carpentry profession, though he had successfully trained some people in the trade but, presently in the face of development and urbanization they hardly have one. The reason for those who do not have is not farfetched according to a respondent:

'Youngsters prefer to engage in commercial motorcycle riding than sitting down for training, because, it is easy for them to make more money than going through 3-5 years training before gaining freedom'.

To the younger ones, acquisition of money is the ultimate goal. Commercial motorcycling is to them much easier and faster way to making more money than any profession. This is a myopic view. It may have been more convenient to make money from commercial motorcycling, otherwise known as *Okada* and use the proceeds to purchase equipment/tools for the trade/profession. This scenario will only be applicable to those who had undergone training but needed money to establish themselves. The moment they engage in okada business, they experience the ease of making money even with optimal risk, as okada riding is risky because of the fatal accidents often encountered. Okada riding is no profession and cannot be handed over to future generation of/one's children. The phenomenon is as bad as a lady introducing her fiancé as an okada rider. She would be told she's yet to find a partner as okada riding is not transferable as a profession to a child. In some other professions, the trainee would commence the vocation, but would later abandon the exercise after meeting a friend engaged in commercial motorcycling.

The stone carver at Abeni Olo'sa's (Susan Wenger's) residence is uneducated. He claimed that:

'they were trained when the trainees respected and revered their bosses, but it is conversely the case these days. Children even hardly respect or fear their parents. During his time, the style and techniques of the profession are taught and handed down over to the trainees, just as he was able to do the same to his children/trainees under him'.

His children and trainees under him executed all the figurines and stand alone sculptural pieces in Susan Wenger's house as shown in Plate 6.4 under his close supervision and intensive training.



Plate 6.4 A collection of stone figurines located around Late Wenger's house

6.30 *The welder*

The welders are responsible for the construction of metal gates and doors of houses while the carpenters are patronized for the wood medium based doors and doorways. People still build wooden doors and doorways in the contemporary times in spite of the preponderance of metal based doors. It seems to be a matter of choice and not necessarily wealth. However, most contemporary buildings bear the metal medium doors and gates. They are more beautifully decorated and glamorously coloured, depicting power and class on both the house and the

owner. Most of the welders met at their workshops were busy working on doors and burglar proofing devices. The very well established artisans with exhibits of their products (Plate 6.6 and 6.7) had been in business for the past 20 to 25 years. They were asked if these doors were bullet proof. The responses were the same. The metal finished doors produced in Nigeria may not be bullet proof except on demand. One of those interviewed stated that:

Most of the doors produced in Nigeria are not bullet proof considering the quality of the metal medium used. The difference is that the general gauge of metal used is only 2mm. For a bullet not to be able to penetrate any door, it would require a 5mm metal gauge and above; that is what makes any door bullet proof.

The construction of a bullet proof door will definitely attract a higher fee than the 2mm metal gauge. The artisan has four boys working under him as apprentices. He claimed to have spent just two years in the course of his own training as an apprentice. This further suggests that the continuity of grooming and training younger people in this vocation keeps the job and profession going. The materials and style of ornamentation in buildings may change but the transition of knowledge and skill continues, thereby keeping the posterity of the vocation and profession. Plates 6.5 and 6.6 are pictures of finished doors and gates, respectively.



Plate 6.5 Finished Metal medium doors ready for purchase and installation



Plate 6.6. Finished Metal medium gates ready for purchase and installation

6.2.11 The Aluminum Door and Window Designers

The aluminum window and window panes producers are another group of artisans contributing to ornamentation in domestic buildings in Osogbo. Aluminium windows appear to be the niche in vogue in the contemporary age of this elemental decoration in buildings. This set of artisans are apparently in serious ‘gold mining’ business as almost everyone rich or poor has adopted the use of this window form for their buildings. Plate 6.7 shows the measured bits and pieces of aluminum cuts for each window design to actualise the forms in plate 6.8. The aluminum rods come in different colour specifications to match the desires of the buyers.



Plate 6.7 Measured aluminum medium cuts to be assembled for window design



Plate 6.8a



Plate 6.8b

Plate 6.8a and b. Aluminium medium window designer's shop and products.

6.3. Summary

Both the artisans and professionals get their clientele through friends and relatives or someone that might have come across their works or collections for referrals. They go about their designs by creativity and as inspired for non-commissioned jobs. The commissioned jobs from architects or other patrons are done to specifications. It is noted that most artisans derive joy and satisfaction from their jobs and some are able to build their own accommodations, send children to school and meet other necessities of life.

One of the aluminum based window artisans said:

‘With this job that I am doing, God will not bring a situation that will allow me to go looking for any kind of paid employment. I am more than satisfied with my job.’

One other good thing that the state government does for the artisans is to get them registered in their professions and ensures each of them has a part in the execution of government projects. The patrons, otherwise known as the building owners and commissioners of ornamentation on building projects have the role of giving executable briefs in respect of their decoration of choice; either to the architect or engineer who now further instructs the artisans. A landlord, Mr Segun Adefila had to renovate his house three times between 2003 and 2014 to meet the standard of his environment by building an overhanging veranda supported by a double twin column and application of stone tiles on a sectional wall of the building facade. It is indeed a major renovation to the building and a most important contribution of patrons to building ornamentation and value placed on such.

This behaviour connotes ornamentation is innate and part of the Yoruba people’s culture right from ancient times. People still go ahead to upgrade their buildings when provision to execute same is available. This is the culture of building houses especially with the less privileged. The phenomenon is corroborated by an adage that says *owo ko ki nkuro lara ile* meaning there is always something to do on the house. A good house gives good comfort, pride and solace and people really cut their coats according to their sizes. There are grandeur buildings with decoration as well as ‘petit’ sizes. The bottom line is, they are all well decorated but with a remarkable difference compared to the opulent.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY, MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

1. Summary

This Chapter discussed the main findings of the thesis and its conclusion. The focus of this research is Yoruba ornamentation in domestic architecture in Osogbo with respect to form, content and meaning. The building elements bearing these ornamentations were identified and discussed in relation to the objectives. The decorative elements in domestic buildings were classified and investigated from the ‘ancient’ through ‘modern’ to the ‘contemporary’. It was noted that in the ornamentation on buildings in Osogbo people keep decorating and fortifying their houses, and at the same time they did so in style and with consciousness for aesthetics. The buildings were not just serving the purpose of shelter but indeed shelter, protection and significant aesthetic experience.

The phenomenon of these grandeur buildings symbolises ‘pomp and power’ as well as flagrant display of wealth, nobility and opulence. The varieties of ornamentation adopted in these buildings are a combination of the Brazilian and classical architecture. Some of the Brazilian styled buildings still reflect the originality of its source while others have undergone modifications to be uniquely Yoruba forms.

Ornamentation in domestic buildings has improved the economy as well as the general urban landscape of the city and created jobs and development to the artisans involved in the trade of ornamentation in buildings in Osogbo. In the midst of this ‘pomp and power’ and the flagrant display of wealth that is evident in the ornamentation of grandeur buildings of the rich, the lowly still survives successfully and are equally caught in the wave of fashioning their houses aesthetically. Ornamentation can therefore be said to be transmissible and favourable to Osogbo city development as well as its people.

In discussing continuity and change of ornamentation in building elements, both the artisans and professionals get their clientele through friends and relatives or someone that might have come across their works or collections for referrals; as a result, continuity with respect to their work continues. They go about their designs by creativity and as inspired for non-commissioned jobs. In which case, they perform any non-commissioned jobs to the best of their satisfaction for clients to come and pick as well as choose as displayed in Plates 6.6, 6.7 and 6.9a). The commissioned jobs by architects or patrons are done to specifications. Most artisans derive joy and satisfaction from their jobs and some are able to meet their daily needs as well as execute capital projects; built their own houses, send children to school and meet other societal demands. The state government also tries to ameliorate the desires of the artisans by getting them to register with their professional bodies and ensures each of them has a part in the execution of government projects relevant to their vocations. The patrons, otherwise known as the building owners and commissioners of ornamentation on building projects have the role of giving executable briefs in respect of their decoration of choice; either to the architect or engineer who further instructs the artisans.

As people build houses in the contemporary times, every landlord would desire current elemental design in vogue, meaning a replication of extant designs in the vicinity as did a Landlord who had to renovate his house three times between 2003 and 2013 to execute contemporaneity of his building consonant to his neighborhood. This phenomenon is a major part played in the contribution of patrons to building ornamentation and the value placed on this art of ornamentation. It further connotes continuity of design within the same age thereby writing the history of elemental decorative form. Generally speaking, when the concept of history is considered, what really comes to mind are the events that were written in text. Whereas, some historical elements were equally documented in form; these forms are artistic expressions which eventually formed part of the elements of the peoples' culture.

These artistic forms are tangibles that define the uniqueness of the totality of what makes up a particular culture. Of particular reference among the totality of what makes up the ancient city of Osogbo are the artistic decorations in domestic buildings. Some artistic decorations on domestic buildings that were examined in this research have proved that these decorations have certain contextual meaning that is of interest to the culture of the Yoruba as reflected in the cocoa leave decorated door (Plate 5.28) of the ancient domestic building in addition to the carved doors with anthropomorphic images (Plate 5.32) of Yoruba daily life in the contemporary genre. The buildings also gave the period of artistic elemental decorations in Osogbo, which means art and architecture have come a long way through the ages. Furthermore, artistic decoration in domestic architecture is also favoured by the current development in the city of Osogbo and the State Government need to involve artisans in certain Government Projects when the need arises.

Main Findings

The findings are enumerated in line with the objectives of the study

1. Documented ornamentation proved the existence of ornamentation in domestic architecture in Osogbo
2. More specialised people are in the production of ornamentation and this is embraced in Osogbo as well as shows the value of the subject to the patrons, producers of decorations and the people of the city.
3. Decorations have certain contextual private meaning that is of interest to the Yoruba culture as reflected at the instance of the rich cocoa farmer's door and other engravings as well as global interpretations

4. Documented ornamentation through the ages of classification have evolved and most prominent in the contemporary.
5. Ornamentation percolates down to the poor in their poor form.
6. It also trickles down to the growing mid-class. How its done is not the focus of this study.
7. In the ancient, the rich man's house was found beside the poor man's house which is not so in the contemporary genre. The rich rather clustered themselves at the Government Reservation Area (GRA).
8. There were no GRAs in the ancient classification, extant GRAs in the ancient were occupied by colonial administrators and their buildings.

Conclusion

Motifs, forms and designs generally do not get out of use but are cyclical as ancient motifs are reoccurring in contemporary elemental decorations in domestic buildings; these are exemplified in the old Roman order of the concrete medium balustrade, the oriel window in addition to the segmental arch. Most contemporary landlords desire their buildings decorated with these contemporary elements of ornamentation whether poor or rich in whatever location of the city. The only difference is the magnitude of the building and extent of ornamentation applied to adorn such buildings.

Yoruba decorative motifs in domestic buildings are reflections of the combination of two external influences; these are the Colonial Administrators (Vlach and Aradeon 1984) in separate publications and Classical Architecture (Adams 1990). This may probably account

for the reason some interviewed persons could not account for the meaning of decorative motifs on their houses other than declare them beautiful except for such private meanings as the cocoa leaf motif inferring the owner's wealth in his life time and epoch. Real ornamentation in domestic buildings is for the rich; this connotes power, opulence and nobility Adams (1990), Myers (2007).

Ornamentation thrives in Osogbo and will continue to thrive. There are more producers of ornamentation in buildings now in Osogbo conversely to the ancient classification. This implies that the building industry is more fragmented in the production of ornamentation as there are specialisations in the industry under the leadership of the professionals; the architects and engineers. While ornamentation flourishes at the higher level of the society, the traces of ornamentation is trickling down to the poor. The idea of its trickling down was not what this research set out to study and therefore remains a gap in this research. This will therefore be useful for future study. This research was set out to study ornamentation which happens to be for the rich even in ancient times. The media in artistic decorations on buildings appear endless as the architects have turned the walls into painting canvas while the building is the easel support. This is quite different from what you have with the ceramists or, painting in fine-arts.

Areas of Further Research

Other possible area of further research is looking at the trickling effect of the flow of ornamentation in domestic architecture to the middle class which was not the focus of this study.

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APPENDIX I

A. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

To Producers of Ornamentation: *The Artisans, Masons, Welders, POP Constructors etc as Informants*

Profile of the Informant:

- 1) How old is he?..... surrogate
- 2) What's his educational background?.....
- 3) His Professional Profile
 - Was his father in the same Profession or he just picked it up?
 - How did he come about the Profession?
 - What's his educational background?
 - Who was his teacher/master?
 - What's the duration of his training?
 - Is his master still alive?
 - What aspect of residential ornamentation is his specialisation?
 - How does he go about his ornamentation production?
 - Who are his Patrons?
 - How does he get his clientele?
 - Does he like his profession?
 - What joy does he derive from his work/profession?... (*Job satisfaction*)
 - How profitable is his profession in economic terms?
 - What ways does he desire to improve his creative process to enhance his economic power?

A. Schedule of Interview for Household or Surrogate

Profile of the Household head as Patron

- Socio-economic and cultural characteristics
- Who was the head when the house was built?

- How rich was he?
- Could he be described as an Elite or Commoner?

Questions for the Family Head/Surrogate

Why did you order the decoration on your house – (*his motivation for the deco*)

How and why did you choose the craftman who made the deco

How was the deco motifs arrived at? – (*discussion*)

- What can the head tell about the decoration in general?
- What's his attitude and beliefs in relation to ornamentation as observed?
- Is the ornamentation “unique” or “popular” or indeed common in its time?
- What does this mean to him?

B. Data from Each Building

1) Building address:

2) Year built

3) i. *Who owns it?*

- a) Is it a family house?
- b) Who's the current head of household?

ii. *Socio-economic characteristics of household owner*

- a) Is he Rich, Well off, Poor, or unknown?

iii. *Is he a Chief, Mogaji or does he hold a political post... local or national?*

iv. *Age of compound Head of at the time of Interview*

- a) Age on becoming compound head
- b) Number of years as head of household head
- c) Birthplace of the father of the household head
- d) Birthplace of present compound head

- 4) Role of the Compound head in the decoration process
 - i) Did they commission the decoration?
 - ii) Was the deco separated from the construction process

Perception of the Decoration

- Was it of the Household Head?
- Was it of the Artisan?
- Observe the attitude of others about decoration on buildings

View Ornamentation in Buildings as Aesthetic

- I. Observe the position of the Decorative Motifs
 - a) Fascade/front Elevation, including Verandas
 - b) Side Elevation (left & right)
 - c) Rear Elevation
- II. Tentative Locations
 - a) Fascia Boards.....
 - b) Floor Demarcations in 2storey building walls.....
 - c) Veranda – balustrades.....
 - d) Doors and Doorways.....
 - e) Windows/Window frames & hoods.....
 - f) Footings around the house.....
 - g) Decoration on Fence and Gate.....

Looking out for Ornamentation in Residential Buildings

View Ornamentation in Buildings as Aesthetic

Observe the position of the Decorative Motifs

- a. Façade/front Elevation, including Verandas
- b. Side Elevations (*left & right*) *design on window frames*
- c. Check Rear Elevation (*view*) of building for noticeable design
- d. Check floor level design in storey buildings (*usually forming a ring round the house*)

- e. Document these in shots of photographs
- f. If there is no recording device, pair up and let one jot down data, while the other interviews the informant

The buildings are categorized into 3; the **Old**, the **New** and the **Contemporary**

Three sets of people to be interviewed:

1. The House Owner (Landlord, or relation as Surrogate)
2. The Producers of Ornamentation (*Masons or Specialized people in the business*)
3. A few other people

A. *Introduce yourself and your mission to the House Owner or Person to be interviewed*

Questions to ask:

Age of the building (*If person isn't sure, ask what historical event happened around the time the house was built*)

Address of building

What does he know about the decoration on the house?

Who commissioned the decoration?

Who's perception (idea) was it? (*was it the landlord's or mason's/bricklayer's*)

Who was the craftsman?

How and why did he choose the craftsman?

How was the decorative motif (design) arrived at?

What can the head or surrogate/person interviewed tell about the deco in general?.....

What is his attitude and belief in relation to ornamentation on building as observed?.....

Is the ornamentation unique or popular or common in its time?

What does ornamentation on the building mean to him?

B. Questions for the Producer of Ornamentation (*usually around the new site area*)

The Researcher introduce himself

Profile of the Informant:

- 4) How old is he?.....
- 5) What's his educational background?.....

His Professional Profile

- Was his father in the same Profession or he just picked it up?
- How did he come about the Profession?
- Who was his teacher/master?
- Is his teacher still alive? *If yes, can he be located?*
- What's the duration of his training?
- What aspect of residential ornamentation is his specialisation?
- How does he arrive at his designs?
- How many trainees does he have under him?
- What materials does he use?
- How does he go about his ornamentation production? *(i.e., the process)*
- Who are his Patrons?
- How does he get his clientele?
- Is his product only for the rich?
- Does he like his profession?
- How profitable is his profession in economic terms?
- What joy does he derive from his work/profession?... *(Job satisfaction)*
- What ways does he desire to improve his creative process to enhance his economic power?

C. Other People

(This is to establish the awareness/attitude of people to the issue of ornamentation in buildings)

- Sir, what's your impression about ornamentation on buildings?
- Do you mind your house having decoration or not
- What does decoration on a house mean to you?

APPENDIX II
CHARACTERISTICS OF ORNAMENTATION
FROM ANCIENT THROUGH THE CONTEMPORARY

1. FLOOR LEVEL DEFINER {FLD}
(Ancient)



App 2,Plate 1



App 2,Plate 2



App 2,Plate 3



App 2,Plate 4



App 2,Plate 5



App 2,Plate 6



App 2,Plate 7. Ancient FLD

Modern Fld



App 2,Plate 7. Modern FLD



App 2,Plate 8. Modern FLD

Contemporary Fld



App 2, Plate 9. Contemporary FLD



App 2, Plate 10. Contemporary FLD

2. AERATION HOLES



App. II Plate 11: Ancient Aeration Holes



Close-up of App. II, Plate 11



App. II Plate 12: Modern Aeration Hole



Close-Up of App. II, Plate 12

3. BALUSTRADES

Ancient Balustrades



App. II Plate 13: Perforated Balcony Blocks



App. II Plate 14: Perforated Balcony blks



App. II Plate 15: Ancient Balustrades



Close-Up of App.II Plate 15



App. II Plate 16: Ancient Balustrades
Special brand on Late Susan Wenger's
Residence.



Close-Up of App.II Plate 16



App. II Plate 17: Ancient Balustrades



Close-Up of App.II Plate 17



App. II Plate 18: Ancient Balustrades



App. II Plate 19: Ancient Balustrades



App. II Plate 20: Ancient Balustrades



App. II Plate 21: Ancient Balustrade

3a) Modern Balustrades



App. II Plate 22: Modern Balustrades



Close-Up of App.II Plate 22



App. II Plate 23: Modern Balustrades



App. II Plate 24: Modern Balustrades



App. II Plate 25: Modern Balustrades



App. II Plate 26: Modern Balustrades

Contemporary Balustrades



App. II Plate 27: Contemporary Balustrade



Close-Up of App. II Plate 27



App. II Plate 28: Contemporary Balustrade



Close-Up of App. II Plate 28



App. II Plate 29: Contemporary Balustrade.



App. II Plate 30: Contemporary Balustrade



App. II Plate 31: Contemporary Balustrade.



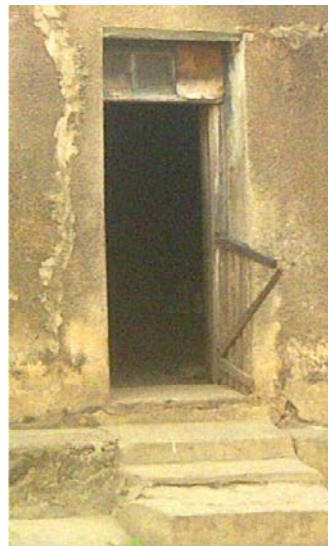
App. II Plate 32: Contemporary Balustrade

4. DOORS AND DOORWAYS

a. Ancient Doors and Doorways



App.II Plate 33. Late Wenger's Residence



App.II Plate 34 Ancient Doorway.



App.II Plate 35 Ancient Doorway.



App.II Plate 36 Ancient Doorway.



App.II Plate 37 Ancient Doorway.



Close-Up of App. II Plate 37



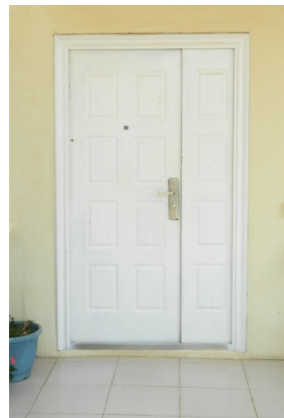
b. Modern Doors and Doorway



App. II Plate 39: Ancient Doorway

App. II Plate 38 Modern Door and Doorway

c. Contemporary Doors and Doorways



App. II plate 40: Contemporary Door



App. II plate 41: Contemporary Door



App. II plate 42: Contemporary Doorway



App. II plate 43: Contemporary Doorway



App.II plate 44: Contemporary Doorway

App. II plate 45: Contemporary Doorway



App. II plate 46: Contemporary Doorway. App. II plate 47: Contemporary Doorway



App. II. Plate 48: Contemporarily Upgraded Doorway

WINDOWS AND WINDOW HOODS

a. Ancient Windows and Window Hoods



App.II Plate 48. Ancient Window



App.II Plate 49. Ancient Window and Hood



App.II Plate 50.
Ancient Window and Hood.



App.II Plate 51. Ancient Window Hood & Hoods

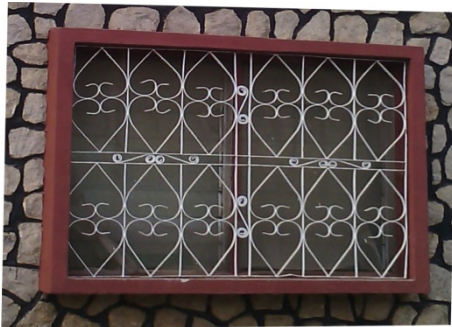
b. Modern Windows



App. II Plate 52. Modern Window



App. II Plate 53. Modern Window



App. II Plate 54: Modern Window



App. II Plate 55 Paneled Modern Window

c. Contemporary Windows



App. II Plate 56: Contemporary Window . App. II Plate 57: Contemporary Window



App. II Plate 58 Contemporary Window

App. II Plate 59 Contemporary Window



App. II Plate 60 Contemporary Window

App. II Plate 61 Contemporary Window



App. II Plate 62 Contemporary Window

ARCHES AND COLUMNS

a. Ancient Arches and Columns



App. II Plate 63: Ancient Arches and Columns



App. II Plate 64: Ancient A & C



App. II Plate 65: Ancient A& C



App. II Plate 66: Ancient A& C



App. II Plate 67: Ancient A& C



App. II Plate 68: Ancient A& C

Modern Arches & Columns



App. II Plate 69 Modern Columns & A. App. II Plate 70. Modern C. & A. `



App. II Plate 71. Modern Columns & Arches. Close-Up of App. II Plate 71



App. II Plate 72: Modern C & A.

App. II Plate 73: Modern C & A.

Contemporary Columns



App. II Plate 74: Contemporary C & A.



App. II Plate 75: Contemporary C & A.



App. II Plate 76: Contemporary C & A.



App. II Plate 77: Contemporary C & A.



App. II Plate 78: Contemporary C & A.



App. II Plate 79: Contemporary C & A.

WALL DECORATIONS

Ancient Wall Decorations



App. II Plate 80 Ancient Wall Deco.



App. II Plate 81. Ancient Wall Deco.



App. II Plate 82. Ancient Wall Deco.



App. II Plate 83. Ancient Wall Deco.

Modern Wall Decoration



App. II Plate 84. Ancient Wall Deco.



App. II Plate 85. Ancient Wall Deco.

Contemporary Wall Decoration



App. II Plate 86. Contemporary Wall Deco.



App. II Plate 87. Contemporary Wall Deco.



App. II Plate 88. Contemporary Wall Deco.



App. II Plate 89. Contemporary Wall Deco.



App. II Plate 90. Contemporary Wall Deco.



App. II Plate 91. Contemporary Wall Deco.

FENCES AND GATES

Fences Appeared Only in the Contemporary Classification of Ornamentation



App. II Plate 92. Contemporary Fence. App. II Plate 93: Contemporary Low Fence



App. II Plate 94. Contemporary Fence. App. II Plate 95: Contemporary High Fence



App. II Plate 96. Contemporary Low Fence.



App. II Plate 97. Contemporary Low Fence.



App. II Plate 98. Contemporary High Fence.



App. II Plate 99. Contemporary Low Fence.

CONTEMPORARY GATES



App. II Plate 100 Contemporary Gate



App. II Plate 101 Contemporary Gate



App. II Plate 102 Contemporary Gate



App. II Plate 103 Contemporary Gate



App. II Plate 104 Contemporary Gate



App. II Plate 105 Contemporary Gate